

NRA NEWS

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NRA MEETINGS



Vol. 5 No. 2

February 1985

Seminars

Basic Foodservice Courses

Basic Supervision in Foodservice

3/5 Kansas City, MO
4/9 Wilmington, DE

Computers in Foodservice: A Primer

4/23 Denver, CO

Dining Room Management

3/13 Cherry Hill, NJ
3/20 Reston, VA
4/3 Des Moines, IA
4/16 Albany, NY
4/18 Meadowlands, NJ
4/22 Savannah, GA
4/24 Pompano Beach, FL

Increasing Foodservice Productivity

4/19 Portland, OR
4/22 Kansas City, MO

Kitchen Management

3/5 Allentown, PA
3/7 Providence, RI
3/19 Rockville, MD
3/21 Rochester, NY
4/2 Burlington, VT
4/4 Manchester, NH
4/9 Atlanta, GA
4/10 Houston, TX
4/14 Bismarck, ND
4/16 Detroit, MI
5/9 St. Louis, MO

Opening a Restaurant: Before You Start Cooking...

3/12 Indianapolis, IN

People-power and Profits

3/27 Oklahoma City, OK
4/10 Cleveland, OH

Tools for Training

3/19 Knoxville, TN
3/21 Louisville, KY
4/16 Richmond, VA
4/18 Milwaukee, WI

Food Production Courses

American Regional Cookery

4/23 Minneapolis, MN
4/25 Denver, CO
5/7 Portland, OR

The Pantry: Prep for Profit

4/17 Milwaukee, WI

Perfecting Your Culinary Skills

3/19 Portland, OR
3/21 Seattle, WA
4/2 St. Louis, MO

Simplified Baking Workshop

3/26 Wichita, KS
3/28 Minneapolis, MN

Soups and Sauces

3/12 Meadowlands, NJ
3/14 Detroit, MI

Foodservice Management Courses

Computers in Foodservice: Advanced

4/24 Denver, CO

Creative Merchandising Techniques

3/6 New Orleans, LA
3/13 Concord, NH
4/16 Boston, MA

Food Cost Management

3/25 Toronto, Ontario, Canada
3/27 Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
4/9 Lancaster, PA
4/11 Portland, ME
4/30 Tulsa, OK

Hospitality Workshop

4/22-23 Full Service Long Island, NY
4/24-25 Fast Food Long Island, NY
5/7-8 Full Service Minneapolis, MN

STUDY GROUP MEETINGS

Market Research

4/10-12 Washington, DC

Financial Officers

4/10-12 Palm Springs

Tax Executives

4/10-12 Palm Springs

EDP

4/16-19 San Diego

Internal Audit

4/30-5/3 Lake Tahoe

Location! Location! Location! How to Successfully Negotiate and Finance Your New Operation

4/1-2 San Francisco, CA

Menu Development

3/10 Washington, DC
4/17 Philadelphia, PA
4/23 Charlotte, NC

Off-Premise Catering

3/25-26 Philadelphia, PA
4/29-30 Columbus, OH

Operational Analysis

2/26-27 Las Vegas, NV

Planning & Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy

3/19-20 Boston, MA
4/16-17 Baltimore, MD

Restaurant Design & Facilities Planning

3/4-5 Tampa, FL

Conferences

3/24-27 National Conference on Computers in Foodservice Las Vegas, NV

Please note that registration fees have been reduced for the Basic Foodservice Courses. For more information, contact:

NRA Education Programs

311 First Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
800-424-5156 or
(202) 638-6100

Foodservice Purchasing Managers

5/15-17 Chicago

MAECO

5/15-17 Chicago

Marketing Executives

5/15-17 Chicago

For more information on specific study groups, contact Philip Kralovec, (312) 853-2525.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Harris O. Machus
President and Owner
Harris O. Machus
Enterprises, Inc.
Birmingham, Michigan

Board acts

Despite the cold, snow, sleet and severe winter weather affecting much of the country, your association has been operating at full speed. In recent weeks both the Board of Directors and the staff have been active on your behalf.

At its February meeting, the Board of Directors voted to oppose a ban on TV and radio advertising of beer and wine. The proposed ban, which runs counter to the American belief in freedom of speech, is not in the best interest of our industry or the nation.

At the same meeting, the Directors established a Task Force to review the Grace Commission Report on cost containment and control in federal spending and to work with other organizations to help reduce waste in government.

The Board also reviewed the status of the Treasury Department proposal to limit the business meal deduction. We discussed the strategy and tactics taken to date to oppose this proposal and developed additional strategies to prevent its inclusion in any forthcoming tax simplification bill.

NRA's ongoing effort to prevent mandatory labeling on restaurant menus is showing some positive results. In November, NRA testified at a hearing on a draft report on sulfites prepared for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) by the Federation of American Societies of Experimental Biologists (FASEB). The draft report called for labels or signs in restaurants when sulfites are present in menu items.

NRA protested this recommendation, pointing out that labeling in restaurants is ineffective and does not provide consumers with sufficient protection. The association said that if FDA believes that sulfites pose a danger to a significant number of people, the agency ought to ban specific uses of the substances.

The labeling recommendation has been deleted from the final version of the FASEB report released January 31. As FDA official Arthur Banks told NRA's Technical Services Committee, "The report permits a partial ban of sulfiting agents in lieu of labeling on menus."

Designed just one year ago, NRA's Alcohol Awareness program is having a significant effect on the man-

Menu labeling recommendation struck down

Alcohol awareness grows

**NRA sponsors
community
promotion**

**NRA surveys
operating results**

**Information
requests increase
65 percent**

ner in which alcoholic beverages are served in restaurants. Of those state restaurant associations responding to NRA's survey, 31 are offering training sessions for servers of alcoholic beverages, and 27 of those 31 are using the program and materials developed by NRA last spring.

During the same period, 1,300 articles have appeared in the national media describing the NRA program and the actions taken by the foodservice industry to help reduce incidents of driving while intoxicated (DWI).

NRA believes that ultimate responsibility for preventing drunk driving lies with the consumer, not the server of alcoholic beverages. Still, the association strongly advocates that every foodservice company that sells alcoholic drinks participate in a server training program. It is in your best long-term interest.

In conjunction with the National Association of Broadcasters, NRA is sponsoring a nationwide promotion designed to reduce drunk driving during the graduation and prom season. Organized by local task forces, Operation Prom/Graduation will feature a written pledge by graduating students not to drive while intoxicated. Participating restaurateurs, florists, habdashers and other retailers will honor the pledge card with discounts and other special offers as determined by the establishment.

Project Prom/Graduation offers restaurateurs an excellent opportunity for community interaction and socially responsible promotions. In late March, NRA will mail each member company a packet containing information sheets, table tents and a poster to help you plan your promotion. I urge you to consider participating in this highly-visible community campaign.

You will shortly receive a questionnaire for NRA's annual *Operating Ratio Study*. The results of this survey will allow you to compare your operating figures with those of comparable firms throughout the country.

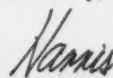
The *Operating Ratio Study* depends on broad member response. Be sure to fill out the questionnaire and return it to NRA.

Many of you have been taking advantage of NRA's Information Service and Library. In fact, 16,200 inquiries were received during the last 12 months. Members are asking for information on subjects ranging from site location to salad recipes. Use the NRA hotline (800-424-5156) to get the information you need to make your operation more effective and efficient.

Our goal is to have you think of contacting the NRA the first instant you have a question related to this industry. If we don't have an answer, we will find out where you can get one.

During the past month, 186 members joined NRA. I welcome you to the most prestigious foodservice trade association in the world. Your participation in NRA will make your business grow and make the association more effective in its endeavors on your behalf. We're glad to have you with us.

Sincerely,



Harris O. Machus
President & Chairman of the Board

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Related department: How's Business

- 13 Catering is one of the fastest growing segments in the foodservice industry. Not only is the field attracting more and more highly specialized entrepreneurs but other operators, including restaurateurs, franchise owners and hotel managers, are also finding their niche in this expanding market. As competition grows, so does the hunger for successful sales strategies. That is why, with this issue, **NRA NEWS** begins a series of articles on off-premise catering.
- 14 Foodborne illnesses are one of the most serious challenges facing any caterer. This article highlights a range of solutions. Don't miss the in-depth look at three common illnesses: staphylococcus, perfringens and salmonellosis.
- 17 Corporate catering is perhaps the greatest opportunity area in off-premise catering. But the market is segmented, and each level requires a different marketing approach.
- 18 Contracts are the glue that forms the bond of understanding, confidence and trust between the client and the caterer.

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- Cookbooks** 32 More and more frequently restaurant operators are compiling their recipes into cookbooks both to celebrate their establishments and to push back culinary frontiers. Don't miss the box on how to get your cookbook into print.

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SHORT ORDERS

National Tourism Week

The travel and tourism industries are gearing up for National Tourism Week—May 19 to 26, 1985. The purpose of the celebration is to tell the public that travel is good for the economy.

The American Hotel and Motel Association (AHMA) is spearheading the promotional activities for the program by developing a travel trivia game. The game is designed to generate travel by featuring questions that focus on historical facts and cultural points of interest in all 50 states. In addition, the game will highlight ques-

tions about the economic benefits of traveling.

The game will be distributed as an in-room amenity to AHMA members during the National Tourism Week. It also will be provided to one station in each of the top 100 radio markets for a radio call-in contest. Sponsors and local hotel/motel properties will donate prizes, and callers will win these prizes for giving the correct answers to on-air questions. The promotion will last two weeks, ending Memorial Day weekend with a grand prize drawing, pooling all of the winners.

To promote the game even further, AHMA will place an advertising insert in both *Time* magazine and *USA Today*. The editorial, written in travel-log style, will provide answers to the

game. The insert will be supported with transportation display posters.

When asked how restaurateurs could help promote National Tourism Week, Betsy Bromberg, AHMA communications director, encouraged restaurateurs to buy the game from AHMA and distribute it to their customers. She also suggested operators can purchase and display the transportation poster or its counter card version, advertise in the publication inserts or become involved with the radio call-in contest by sponsoring prizes.

For further information, contact your local AHMA chapter or Betsy Bromberg at AHMA headquarters, 888 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10019; (212)265-4506.

First nutrition course for chefs

Last month 25 West Virginia chefs and cooks participated in the nation's first nutrition course, sponsored by the West Virginia Chefs and Cooks Association and the American Health Association West Virginia Affiliate and backed by the West Virginia Restaurant Association. The course was designed to fill a new requirement that chefs affiliated with the American Culinary Federation must take 32 or more hours of an accredited nutrition course to gain certification.

For five days the chefs heard lectures and presentations by experts in the field of nutrition. They became acquainted with the role of nutrition in health and learned how to translate that knowledge into healthful recipes. They also learned how to modify foods for people on diabetic, cardiovascular, low-sodium and other therapeutic diets.

As part of the course, each participant was required to prepare two menus for breakfast, lunch and dinner. One menu had to contain foods that are low in sodium, calories or cholesterol, and the entire day's menu could not exceed 1,500 calories. The other menu was to be designed for diabetics.

On Friday, the chefs were given a chance to put into practice the things they had learned by preparing a meal that contained between 500 and 700 calories. This meal was judged by Roland Schaeffer, chief experimental chef for H. J. Heinz Co. in Pittsburgh, PA., who used the same criteria which are standard in judging food

competitions around the world. The chefs also were given a written test on the information presented in the course.

Wiley Newbold, executive chef of the Sheraton Inn in Clarksburg, received the Best of Show trophy with a score of 117 points out of a possible 120.

Bottler helps search for missing children

A soft-drink bottler is adding his company's resources to a growing campaign to find missing children, reports *The Washington Times*.

Abarta Inc. of Pittsburgh, PA, which bottles Coca-Cola and other soft drinks in Cleveland, OH, Bethlehem, PA, and Buffalo, NY, is plac-

ing photographs and descriptions of missing children on pop bottles distributed in those cities.

Three sizes of soft drink bottles are wrapped in paper aprons, which carry the information. Readers are given a toll-free telephone number to report any leads.

The company will feature a new group of missing children every three weeks. Each rotation represents 500,000 bottles.

Americans eat out more often

According to a new report by The Conference Board, Americans are eating out more often. Thirty two percent of our food dollars are spent in

restaurants—up from 28 percent in the 1970s and 17 percent in the 1960s.

Younger families are becoming more important to the food business. Households under age 35 now represent 35 percent of food spending—up from 22 percent in the 1970s. Single men are also a significant segment. They outspend women—\$923 to \$370.

WASHINGTON REPORT

Reminder on tip reporting

Attention full-service operators: If you haven't filed a Form 8027 with IRS, you'd better do so promptly. IRS Form 8027 is used to comply with the 1982 tip reporting law and must be filed by Feb. 28.

NRA mailed a copy of the form and its instructions to all NRA organizational members earlier this month in the *NRA Washington Weekly*.

The form must be filed annually by any restaurant that

- 1) has tipped employees
- 2) employs more than 10 full-time employees (or the equivalent of 80 employee hours) on a typical business day.

Establishments covered by the law must report total charged tips, total charged receipts with tips, total tips reported by employees, total gross receipts and total "allocated" tips.

Tip income must be allocated when total tips reported by all employees in the establishment fall short of eight percent of gross food and beverage receipts (less carry-out sales, state and local taxes and any sales to which a service charge of 10 percent is attached).

1984 was the second year of the new tip reporting law, and it was the first full year of allocation. In 1983, allocation did not apply during the first quarter.

IRS says employee tip reporting has increased since the new reporting requirements were enacted but that compliance on the part of employers has not been good.

Last December, IRS said that of 125,000 establishments which should have filed an 8027 for 1983, only 40,000 had complied. It also said that it was sending delinquency notices to those restaurants that had not filed their 8027.

Employers who fail to file a Form 8027 face substantial penalties:

- The penalty for failure to file is \$50 per required statement, up to a maximum of \$50,000.

- If the failure to file is determined by IRS to be due to negligence, the penalty is an additional 10 percent of the amounts required to be reported.

- If civil fraud is found, the penalty is 50 percent of the unreported amounts.

Penalties for employees . . .

Many employees are of the opinion that they need only report eight percent of their sales as tip income. This is not true! If they are audited by IRS, they will find themselves paying back taxes, penalties and interest on income they should have reported.

You should remind your staff that tipped employees are required by law to report *all* of their tips, and under-reporting will subject them not only to tax liability on unreported tips but also to penalties:

- Interest will be charged from the due date of the return (April 15 of the year in question). The current interest rate is 13 percent.

- If IRS finds that failure to report is due to negligence, the penalty is five percent of the unpaid taxes, with an additional penalty of 50 percent of the interest

due for the period between the due date of the original return and the date of assessment.

- If civil fraud is found, the penalty is 50 percent of the unpaid taxes.

- Once IRS serves notice that the taxes are owed, an additional penalty of 0.5 percent of the taxes due for each month that they are unpaid, up to 25 percent, may be applied.

- A penalty of \$50 applies when the employee fails to provide a statement of tip income to the employer.

- A penalty of 50 percent of the employee's share of Social Security taxes due on the unreported tips may also be levied.

Example . . .

The following example illustrates how the above penalties can mount up:

Suppose a single waitress in 1983 earned \$3.35 an hour in wages and reported \$3.00 an hour in tips. Her employer withheld taxes on income of \$6.35 an hour, 40 hours a week, for 50 weeks. Her annual taxable income was \$12,700. Her federal income tax for that year came to \$1,623, and she paid Social Security taxes of \$850. Total federal tax liability: \$2,473.

Suppose an audit, conducted on April 15, 1985, determined she had actually earned an additional \$2.00 an hour in tips, resulting in an unreported tip income of \$4,000 for 1983. Her actual annual income, then, was \$16,700. Her federal income tax on that amount would have been \$2,511; Social Security taxes would have amounted to \$1,118.

Based on this audit, she

owed back federal income taxes of \$888, plus \$268 in Social Security taxes. In addition, she was penalized by IRS as follows:

\$230 (interest for two years @ 13%)

\$ 44 (5% negligence penalty)

\$115 (interest penalty of 50%)

\$134 (50% of Social Security taxes owed)

\$523 TOTAL penalties

Total back taxes and penalties on 1983 tip income of \$4,000 = \$523 in penalties + \$888 in federal income tax + \$268 in Social Security, or \$1,679.

As this example demonstrates, an employee may be saddled with significant liability in the event of an IRS audit. An employee may also be required to pay back state taxes, but generally IRS audits do not trigger state revenue audits.

For more information on tip reporting and Form 8027, contact the NRA government affairs staff in Washington, (800) 424-5156.

NRA argues against caps for business meal deduction

NRA officials met with Ronald Pearlman, assistant Treasury secretary for tax policy, last month to discuss the department's tax simplification plan and to present the results of a Chase Econometrics study on business entertainment meal spending.

The Chase study shows that the Treasury's proposal to cap business meal deduc-

WE'RE COUNTING ON **YOUR** **OPINION**

NRA's monthly membership poll tracks your views on important national issues affecting the foodservice industry.

Your responses to these questions will help NRA represent the industry in Washington.

Question 1: Eliminate farm supports?

This year Congress will consider legislation to extend or replace the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981, commonly referred to as the 1981 farm bill. This comprehensive law governs federal farm prices and income support programs for milk, grains and other commodities. Farm bills have been enacted in four-year cycles since 1973.

Congressional debate over farm policy will be spurred by the serious problems now facing agriculture and the alarming rise in support costs. Federal spending for price supports soared seven-fold between 1980 and 1983; the cost of government programs in 1983 alone reached \$28 billion. Huge commodity surpluses have depressed markets and prices. Farm bankruptcies are at near-record highs, farmland value is falling and farm income is 20 percent below 1979 levels. And U.S. farm exports have fallen 10 percent since 1980.

Some analysts believe that farm programs require a major overhaul; others say no major changes are needed. The administration favors a "free market" approach and has proposed deep cuts in farm subsidies, including elimination of the dairy price support program. On the other hand, farm state legislators are expected to fight to preserve these programs.

■ **Pros**—Federal crop loan rates and subsidy payments are too high. Reducing or eliminating them would better align production with demand, lower federal budget costs and sharpen our competitive edge in the world market. Also, consumer prices would fall if supports are cut, since farm programs have artificially raised prices—as much as 18 cents a gallon for milk.

■ **Cons**—We need federally-supported reserves of food to stabilize prices and supplies. Even in a market-oriented environment, programs are needed to protect consumers when events beyond our control cause food prices to soar. Curtailing farm supports may reduce prices initially, but eventually supply would lag, causing higher consumer prices and fluctuations in prices.

Should current farm programs be eliminated in favor of a market-oriented system?

Question 2: Are employer sanctions necessary?

Immigration reform, one of the most controversial issues of the 98th Congress, will continue to concern legislators due to the dramatic increase in illegal immigration in recent years. The lure of relatively high American wages has drawn many aliens illegally into the country to take positions in the American workforce.

Immigration reform legislation—such as the Simpson-Mazzoli bill nearly enacted last year—penalizes employers who knowingly hire illegal aliens. These employer sanctions are intended to discourage employers from deliberately hiring illegals, thus leading to fewer jobs for illegals and ultimately discouraging them from entering the country.

Employer sanctions are usually accompanied by employer recordkeeping and verification procedures. If an employer were investigated for suspected violations, he would be required to produce an affidavit signed by himself and the employee in question, which stated the employee was legally entitled to accept employment. Sanctions against employers who violate the law include both civil and criminal penalties.

■ **Pros**—Employer sanctions are essential to gain control of the illegal immigration problem. The threat of progressively harsher penalties for employers who deliberately hire illegals is the only way to ensure employer compliance with the law. By examining IDs an employer knows he is complying with the law, and requiring affidavits protects him in the event of an investigation.

■ **Cons**—Employers should not be required to enforce immigration laws. Enforcement should be the responsibility of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Employer verification and recordkeeping are burdens that employers should not have to bear, considering that most employers never come into contact with illegal aliens. Threatening employers with civil and criminal penalties only encourages them to discriminate against anyone who appears to be an alien.

Are employer sanctions necessary for effective immigration control?

Please respond to the above questions, using the attached postage-paid card.

tions at \$10 for breakfast, \$15 for lunch and \$25 for dinner would have serious effects on the restaurant industry as well as on the national economy.

Study shows loss of jobs, revenues . . .

NRA told Treasury officials that the study indicated the following consequences during 1986, the first year the new law would be in effect:

- the loss of 140,000 foodservice related jobs and a rise in the national unemployment rate of one-tenth of one percent

- a decrease in state and local revenues from personal income tax and sales tax

- a decrease in federal revenues from personal income tax and Social Security taxes and an increase in federal expenditures for unemployment compensation and welfare payments.

Although revenues from corporate income tax would rise, these losses and expenditures would more than offset the gain. The net loss to federal, state and local governments would be \$1.1 billion in the first year. In the second year, the revenue loss would exceed \$1.6 billion, Chase found.

Based on the Chase research, NRA said the Treasury proposal would severely injure the restaurant industry, necessitating the closing of many fine dining establishments and resulting in the loss of jobs for thousands of employees.

Assistant Secretary Pearlman agreed that the business meal cap would have an adverse effect on the industry, but he noted that other industries would also be affected by Treasury's plan.

Pearlman not concerned about revenue loss . . .

He also said he was not too concerned about revenue loss from the cap, since

the tax simplification plan as a whole will produce about as much revenue as the current tax code. Some of the provisions may lose money, he said, but others will raise money.

In discussing the reasons for proposing a business meal cap, Pearlman said Treasury sought to curtail tax breaks that involve an element of personal benefit, such as club dues and tickets at sporting events.

A cap forces businesses to evaluate the benefit of business entertainment more on its own merit, without the full incentive of a tax break, Pearlman said. One of the goals of tax reform should be to reduce government's influence on private sector decision-making, he said.

Pearlman also noted that there is a public perception that the business meal de-

duction is abused (the "three-martini lunch"). Whether the perception is justified or not, it leads to a lack of respect for the tax system and reduces compliance, he said.

In making its case to the administration, NRA has argued against the proposed caps on several fronts. The most obvious and serious argument concerns the economic consequences to the industry, as described in the Chase findings.

NRA contends caps would complicate tax code . . .

NRA also contends that the caps would complicate rather than simplify the tax

code by creating an artificial constraint on business entertainment meal spending. The business meal is a legitimate business expense—the same as advertising and operational expenses—and should not be subject to arbitrary limits.

Also NRA maintains that the proposed caps do not take into account regional differences in menu prices and would lock in deduction ceilings without provision for indexing. And if the caps were enacted, they could be lowered by subsequent legislation, resulting in even greater hardships for restaurateurs.

—Jay Morris

If you haven't already written the President to protest the proposed caps, please do so. The greater the response from the industry, the less likely the administration is to view the caps as a noncontroversial item to be included in its final tax reform plan. Write to: The President, The White House, Washington, DC 20500. Please send a copy of your letter to the NRA government relations office.

Your opinion results are in

"We're Counting on Your Opinion," the new **NRA NEWS** membership poll, has been enthusiastically received by you, our readers. Your reply cards continue to arrive.

Here are the results of the first two polls, which appeared in the November and December issues of the magazine.

November results . . .

To gauge the effect of important issues of the day on your business, the **NRA NEWS** features two questions each month for your comment. (See page 8.)

In November, "We're Counting on Your Opinion" asked, "Should the minimum wage be increased?" and "Should our current income tax system be re-

placed with a flat tax?"

Respondents overwhelmingly opposed an increase in the minimum wage—88 percent answered "no" to the question and 11 percent said "yes." One percent had no opinion.

Most of the respondents (60 percent) said they favor a flat tax; 31 percent said they did not. Nine percent expressed no opinion.

About two-thirds of the respondents said they operate some type of tableservice restaurant. Another 17 percent operated fast food establishments, and nearly one in 10 operates a cafeteria operation.

Based on information provided, our November sample represented 9,807 units employing 336,561 people.

December results . . .

In December, "We're Counting on Your Opinion" asked, "Should the fringe benefits you provide your

employees be subject to federal income tax?" and "Would the elimination of ACRS and ITC in favor of Treasury's tax reform plan benefit your business?"

Respondents solidly opposed a tax on fringe benefits—83 percent answered "no" to the question, and 17 percent said "yes."

Most of the respondents (64 percent) said that the elimination of ACRS and ITC would not benefit their businesses, while 23 percent believed that it would benefit their businesses. Thirteen percent expressed no opinion on this question.

Of the December respondents, 60 percent operate some type of tableservice restaurant, while about one-fifth operate a fast food restaurant. One in 10 operates a cafeteria.

Based on the information provided, the December survey represents 4,338 operations employing 257,974 people.

THE BOARD ROOM

Robert Neville remembered

On January 7, 1985, Robert Neville, former executive vice president of the National Restaurant Association, died in Arlington, VA, after a long illness. Neville served as a foodservice industry spokesman in Washington for more than 16 years.

"Bob was a man of great wisdom and integrity who gave years of good counsel and capable leadership to the foodservice industry," said NRA Executive Vice President William Fisher.

Neville joined NRA as assistant counsel in 1968 and became the association's general counsel in 1971. In 1979, he served as the acting chief staff officer of the association and was named executive vice president in 1981. He retired from that position in 1984 due to illness.

Neville's expertise in tax and labor law was profound, and he is credited with engineering many significant political victories for the industry.

He was highly respected in Washington, and his passing was noted with sorrow by many leading political figures.

- *Former Rep. Barber Conable (R-NY):* "Bob was a vigorous association leader who was very much in touch with what was happening in Washington. He will be missed."
- *Former Rep. John Erlenborn (R-IL):* "Bob was a top rate representative of the foodservice industry—and perhaps more important a top rate human being."



Neville frequently presented the industry's position.

- *Senator Robert Dole (R-KS):* "Bob and I generally agreed, but when we didn't, we understood each other. I always re-

spected his position, and it was a pleasure to work with him because of his honesty and integrity."

- *Rep. Guy Vander Jagt (R-*

MI): "Bob was a warm and generous person who served his cause with great devotion. I considered him a good friend."

- *Rep. William H. Bonner (D-TN):* "Those of us in Congress knew Bob to possess a keen analytical mind which could strip away the tangential arguments and quickly get to the heart of the matter. He worked unceasingly for the good of his industry and his country."

A retired Marine Colonel, Neville was buried with military honors in Arlington Cemetery on January 9.

NRA Board selects new leaders

During the winter meeting of NRA's Board of Directors in Phoenix, AZ, the Board nominated Ted J. Balestreri, co-owner of Restaurants Central and the award-winning Sardine Factory in Monterey, CA, NRA chairman of the board and president for the year beginning May 21, 1985. Balestreri will succeed NRA President Harris O. Machus, president and owner of Harris O. Machus Enterprises, Inc. in Birmingham, MI.

In addition to the Sardine Factory, Restaurants Central owns and operates three other fine-dining establishments in California: The Rogue, the Butcher Shop and San Simeon Restaurant.

An acknowledged leader in foodservice, Balestreri is past president of the Cali-

fornia Restaurant Association, member of the board of trustees of both the National Institute for the Foodservice Industry (NIFI) and the California Restaurant Association Education Foundation.

Balestreri is the recipient of a number of coveted industry honors including the IFMA Gold Plate Award, the Monterey Peninsula Hotel and Restaurant Association's Hospitality Professional of the Year Award, and the American Academy of Achievement's Golden Plate Award.

At the Board Meeting, G. "Jim" Hasslocher, president and chairman of the board of Frontier Enterprises, a privately-owned foodservice operation headquartered in San Antonio, TX, was nominated NRA's new vice-president.

Hasslocher is past president of both the San Antonio and the Texas Restaurant Associations and currently serves as NRA's treasurer. He was named

outstanding Texas restaurateur of the year in 1961 and won the IFMA Gold Plate Award in 1974.

Michael J. Grisanti, the president and chief executive officer of Grisanti, Inc., was nominated NRA's new treasurer. Grisanti is the chairman of NRA's active Task Force on Alcohol Awareness. He also chaired the Hospitality Committee which developed the association's successful Hospitality Project.

NRA's nominated officers are officially elected at the annual membership meeting during the NRA Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show. This year's annual membership meeting will be held in the Drury Lane Theatre of McCormick Place on Monday, May 20 at 2:30 p.m. NRA's new chairman of the board and president will be honored at a Grand Banquet and Show in the Grand Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency Chicago, on Tuesday, May 21.

—Dorothy Dee

TASTE OF AMERICA

Brings Gala Food to the Inaugural



The six-foot wide, eight-foot long and three-foot high cake in the shape of the U.S. Capitol was the magnificent centerpiece.

Visitors to "Taste of America," a gala food festival honoring the inauguration of President Ronald Reagan and Vice President George Bush, may have felt as though they stumbled into a gourmet's dream—aisles and aisles of house delicacies, presented by some of America's best dining establishments and some of the finest native wines. The event, officially sanctioned by the Presidential Inaugural Committee, took place January 18–20 at the Washington Convention Center in Washington, DC.

Quadrettoni Alla Genovese, an artichoke pasta with scallops and roe in a light basil sauce, was featured by Casa Grisanti (Louisville, KY). In order to serve the dish to the more than 20,000 people who attended the event, 300 pounds of scallops and roe were flown in from Paris and 150 pounds of pasta, 70 pounds of Parmesan cheese, 60 pounds of pesto

sauce and 50 pounds of flour were trucked to the nation's capital from Louisville.

Other dishes featured at Taste of America ranged from Abalone Cream Bisque from Monterey, California's Sardine Factory to Triple Chocolate Mousse from the Machus Red Fox in Bloomfield, MI.

Forty restaurants, 31 wineries and one brewery from across the nation took

part in the culinary event. Participating restaurants were the recipients of one of three awards: The Travel Holiday Fine Dining Award, the Mobile 4-Star or the Ivy Award.

Two culinary schools, Johnson & Wales College of Providence, RI, and the New England Culinary Institute of Montpelier, VT, also participated in Taste of America. Johnson & Wales sent 60 students under the



NRA Vice President Ted Balestreri and partner Bert Cutino of The Sardine Factory ladle miniature portions of their restaurant's offering, Abalone Cream Bisque.



Chef Leopold of Machus Red Fox displays the house specialty, Triple Chocolate Mousse.

supervision of Ken Levy, director of external affairs, to act as assistants to restaurateurs. The New England Culinary Institute sent seven chefs under the supervision of John Dra-



Chef Salvatore of Casa Grisanti serves Quadrettoni Alla Genovese (Artichoke Pasta w/Scallops in Roe & Basil Sauce) to one of 20,000 people who attended the three-day event.



Each booth at Taste of America was distinctively and attractively adorned, such as this tasteful display of wines by Far Niente Winery.

now, vice president, to construct the centerpiece for the event—a six-foot wide, eight-foot long and three-feet high cake in the shape of the U.S. Capitol.

Taste of America was chaired by Detroit restaura-

teur William C. Anton, who developed the concept for the event in 1980 with Taste of Detroit at the Republican National Convention. The success of that event inspired the first Taste of America at the 1981 presidential inaugural. Robert Lawrence Balzer, food and beverage editor of *Travel Holiday Magazine*, served as chairman of food and wine selection in both 1981 and 1985.

Taste of America hosted receptions for presidential and vice presidential gala attendees and for governors and elected state officials. Admission also was open to the general public for \$9.50 per person on Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Attendees were entitled to sample their fill for the price of admission. Although the project was not a moneymaking venture, it succeeded in spotlighting the hospitality industry during the inauguration and in establishing a tradition for future celebrations. Each restaurant and winery contributed a great deal of food, wine, time and talent to participate in Taste of America.



Bill and Frank Regas brought 12,000 portions of Regas' famous clam chowder all the way from Knoxville, TN, for Taste of America.

CATERING

From Soup to Nuts

Weddings in banquet halls used to be the norm for the catered affair. This is no longer true. Today, catered functions range from breakfast in bed to corporate celebrations on a Lear jet. With these expanded possibilities comes a burgeoning interest in the off-premise catering segment. Not only is the field attracting more and more highly specialized entrepreneurs but other operators, including restaurateurs, franchise owners and hotel managers, are also finding their niche in this expanding market.

As competition grows, so does the hunger for successful sales strategies. Last fall nearly 200 people came to NRA's National Conference on Off-Premise Catering to examine new opportunity areas, explore behind-the-scene practices and to share experiences.

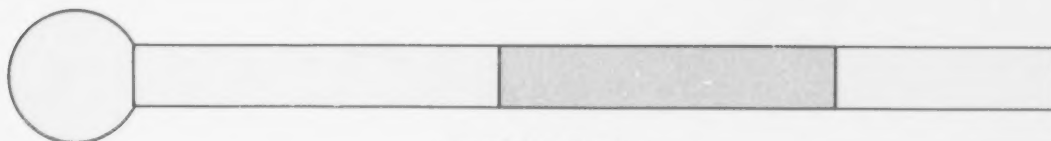
They were not disappointed. Participants learned how to tap the corporate market—perhaps the fastest growing opportunity area in off-premise catering. They explored menu possibilities—from lite food to ragouts. They discussed food handling problems, staff training, down payments, overtime rates, contracts and leftovers. And they even learned how to lick the slow season dilemma with such services as rent a chef, breakfast-in-bed baskets, catering gifts of the month and freezer pacs.

The excitement of the conference inspired **NRA News** to begin a series of articles on off-premise catering. This month's issue contains the first installment, based on some of the topics covered at the meeting. Other issues will be covered in the months to come.



FOOD POISONING

The Caterer's Nightmare



by Kathy Boyle

Food poisoning is one of the most serious challenges facing any caterer. One large, Southern university's welcoming picnic for freshmen shows how easily it can happen. Two days before the picnic, macaroni was boiled for macaroni salad and placed into 30-gallon containers. Although the macaroni was put into a refrigerator, the middle portion of the 30-gallon container never really cooled. The next day, the macaroni was brought out of refrigeration for several hours while celery and onions were cut for adding. Then these vegetables and mayonnaise were mixed into the macaroni by hand.

Once mixed, the salad was returned to the 30-gallon container for storage. Finally, very early the next morning, the day of the picnic, the macaroni was brought out of refrigeration again, this time for portioning into four-ounce individual plastic serving cups for each student. These servings sat out until it was time for the picnic in the afternoon. That evening when the emergency

room was overrun with students with profuse projectile vomiting, it became apparent the macaroni salad was the culprit.

Although this example is one of obvious negligence, caterers do have problems keeping food sanitary. Faced with preparing food for large events, caterers must often start food preparation in advance, increasing the potential risk of foodborne illness. Cooking food in one location and then moving it across town only to sit while a speaker scheduled to speak for five minutes drones on for an hour can also cause problems.

A range of solutions . . .

Rigorous planning to prevent time/temperature catastrophes is the beginning of any serious food handling program. Food must be kept out of the temperature danger zone of 45°F to 140°F. It is in this temperature range that bacteria can grow best. Below 45°F, it is cold enough to inhibit growth; and above 140°F, it is hot enough to stifle growth. Although some bacteria can grow outside this temperature range, bacteria multiply most rapidly within the danger zone. As any foodservice owner who has had a foodborne illness outbreak will attest, bacteria don't grow arithmetically; they grow geometrically.

New advanced cooking and holding ovens are solving the problem of

keeping food at safe temperatures without drying it out. This adds greater flexibility when unforeseen delays occur. "If we're doing a wedding and the bride's parents want the dancing to go on a little longer, we don't have to worry about the prime rib," says Harvey Swartz, general manager of Signature Caterers in Miami Beach, FL. "The oven is probably one of the better investments I ever made," he adds.

Keeping plates warm can also help regulate the temperature of food items served. But how do you keep 300 plates warm out on location? Thuerich sets up two round tables, stacked one on top of the other. He places the dishes on the bottom table and puts fire resistant skirting around the top table. Then he puts a small space heater alongside the dishes.

Back at the kitchen . . .

In the kitchen as well as out on the job, the time/temperature relationship is the biggest concern of caterers. Ridgewells Caterer in Washington, DC, seldom sends hot food to a job. "We prepare foods here in the kitchen under strict controls and quickly cool them," explains Ridgewells General Manager Jay Treadwell.

Once foods are prepared, they are quickly refrigerated in shallow three-inch pans. "To assure proper cooling we don't stack anything," says Tread-

Kathy Boyle is a free-lance writer in the Washington, DC, area who frequently writes on foodservice topics for NRA NEWS.

well firmly. Even the carts in the refrigeration room are the wire rack type to allow air to circulate freely. This speeds up cooling. The refrigeration room itself opens directly onto the loading dock. From there, food is transported on Ridgewells fleet of 30 refrigerated Mercedes trucks.

Miles Thuerich of Thuerich Catering in Milwaukee, WI, considers the caterer an "advanced restaurateur" who pioneers solutions to food han-

dling problems on behalf of the food-service industry. Ingenious solutions to the time/temperature problem highlight what an excellent job many caterers are doing.

"To keep food in the proper temperature range requires electricity both for our trucks and our ovens and for our heating and steaming equipment. Often the location doesn't have enough electrical outlets," observes Thuerich. That is why he decided to

custom-build an oven that would be self-sufficient. He worked with a consultant and a manufacturer of cooking and holding ovens to build the oven he envisioned with alternative power sources—electricity, propane and gas. This way, if he gets to a site where electricity is not available, he switches over to an alternative source of power.

Alan Elias of Al's Custom Caterers in Minneapolis, MN, previews every

Foodborne illnesses of frequent occurrence

Name of illness	Foods usually involved	How introduced into food	Clinical syndrome	Preventive or corrective procedures
Staphylococcus	Cooked ham or other meat, chopped or diced; cream filled or custard pastries; other dairy products; Hollandaise sauce; bread pudding; potato salad; chicken, fish, and other meat salads; "warmed-over" food	Food handlers' nasal discharges, local skin infections (acne pimples, boils and cuts) Holding foods at bacterial growing temperatures	Incubation period 30 minutes to 8 hours (usually 2 to 4 hours) Majority of cases with vomiting	Wash hands after coughing, sneezing, smoking, going to the toilet Cool foods rapidly Put foods in shallow pans in refrigerators Keep cold foods at 45°F or below Keep hot foods at 140°F or above Cover infections with waterproof dressing or Band-Aid Restrict workers with diarrhea, colds, pimples, sores and other infections from touching foods
Perfringens	Meat which has been boiled, steamed, braised, or partially roasted, allowed to cool several hours and subsequently served either cooled or reheated	Natural contaminate of meat which becomes active when foods are kept at room temperature, stored in large pots in refrigerator and are inadequately reheated	Incubation period 9 to 15 hours Majority of cases with diarrhea and cramps but little vomiting or fever	Cool foods rapidly Put foods in shallow pans in refrigerators to facilitate cooling Keep cold foods at 45°F or below Keep hot foods at 140°F or above Reheat leftover foods to 160°F Wash hands after going to toilet, handling raw food, and doing activities other than food preparation Clean and disinfect kitchen equipment Restrict workers with diarrhea from touching foods Proper cleaning of fresh vegetables
Salmonellosis	Meat and poultry, diced foods, egg products, custards, shellfish, soups, gravies, sauces, "warmed-over" foods	Fecal contamination by food handlers Cross-contamination of cooked foods from raw foods (i.e., meat, poultry, eggs, unpasteurized milk) with common equipment or hands Inadequate cooking Keeping food at room temperature Storing foods in large pots in refrigerators Holding foods at warm (bacterial growing) temperatures Inadequate cleaning of equipment Inadequate reheating of cooked foods	Incubation period 6 to 48 hours Majority of cases with diarrhea	Cook foods to internal temperatures of 165°F Use separate equipment for raw and cooked products Cool foods in shallow pans in refrigerators Keep cold foods at 45°F or below Keep hot foods at 140°F or above Reheat leftover foods to 160°F Clean and disinfect kitchen utensils and equipment Wash hands after visiting toilet and handling raw foods of animal origin Restrict workers with diarrhea or fever from touching foods Eliminate rodents and flies

Source: NRA Sanitation Operations Manual, Center for Disease Control

site to assure there are enough electrical outlets and power sources. He often takes along one or more power generators to provide the constant source of power needed to keep food hot or cold in the proper temperature zone. "As for my refrigerated trucks," says Elias, "the refrigeration can run on the truck motor if necessary."

When reheating food, it is important to do so quickly, says Robert Baker, sanitarian for the City of Annapolis, MD. He cautions, "Don't reheat food in a slow cooker, but rather bring it up to 160°F quickly."

He also advises that food not be served in the containers used for transporting, such as crabs brought into an operation, steamed and then put back in the same basket.

Although caterers, in general, clean trucks regularly, William Gavigon, foodservice director for JFK Memorial Hospital in Lake Worth, FL, says these precautions are especially critical for rented refrigerated trucks. "We clean the trucks when we get them," says Gavigon. "The trucks we rent are usually used to transport crated or fresh refrigerated food. After they are used for this purpose, the refrigeration is turned off and bacteria begin to grow. When we rent the truck, it may look clean, but it may still not be safe."

Sanitation precautions go back to planning process . . .

"There is no detail a caterer can overlook," says Elias. Menu planning ahead of the event can cover potential problems. Elias reviews the entire program with his customers. He remembers planning a breakfast for a movie crew on location an hour outside of town. "If they wanted scrambled eggs and bacon, they had to designate a specific break time from filming. If they couldn't set a break time that day, we went with coffee and donuts."

Swartz of Signature Caterers offers additional cautions for site planning. "Stay in your own area," he says. "To avoid food handling or sanitation problems, I either stay on my truck or in the garage where I can clean and set up my own equipment." In those cases where Swartz visits a home and notices things, such as a dirty oven, he is very direct with the customer. "I've never lost a job by telling customers to clean their oven," Swartz explains.

Besides the refrigerated trucks and stoves and ovens on wheels, other on-site sanitation precautions include the caterer's own mobile water supply. Elias says, "If there isn't running water at the site, we carry our own." Elias uses propane to heat the water. "Our clean-up operation means rinsing, scraping and sorting dishes as we put them on the truck. Not only does it help back at the dishwashing area, but it keeps away flies and rodents," Elias observes.

The food itself . . .

According to the 1976 Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) Food-service Model Sanitation Ordinance, food for all foodservice operators must be obtained from "approved sources." It is usually no problem to obtain inspected, licensed or approved food and ingredients. "However, with the proliferation of 'gourmet' operations where many otherwise inspected products are made fresh on the premises, added caution must be exercised," maintains Mel Kramer, president of Environmental Health Associates, a sanitation consulting firm in Baltimore, MD. "Aunt Tilly's pickled peppers might not pass inspection."

Proper inspection at the time the food is received can eliminate potentially hazardous food from the system. If meat is coming in the back door in poor condition, for example, it not only will yield less after it is cooked, but it also may be dangerous to eat.

Perhaps the greatest unspoken danger with the food itself is to reuse it. What should a caterer do with leftovers? Experts agree unequivocally: *don't reuse them*. Only condiments should ever be reused.

Consultant Mel Kramer observes that leftovers are actually paid for. "If caterers think about it, they have a built-in insurance policy, unlike a regular restaurateur. They have a guarantee policy with the client, so they are covered in the case of a large number of no-shows."

Personal cleanliness . . .

Although most individuals would consider personal hygiene a matter of common sense, it is an area where education, training, retraining and supervision all play a large role.

Individuals with coughs, open sores or infections obviously should not be working with food. If there is a

shortage of staff, consider shifting an employee to other work, such as dishwashing or receiving, until he or she no longer poses a threat of infection.

According to Kramer, two problem areas that are often overlooked are washing hands when arriving at work and smoking. "Washing hands before leaving home isn't good enough," explains Kramer. "They've ridden the subway or a bus or maybe read a newspaper on their way to work."

With regard to smoking, Kramer asks, "You wouldn't allow any employee to spit in the food would you? Smoking is doing the same thing. The saliva gets on the cigarette, the employee handles the cigarette with his or her fingers and then handles the food, transmitting the saliva to the food. Smoking should not be allowed in the food preparation area, and hand washing should be mandatory after a cigarette."

Many caterers do not specifically use an official company manual to teach food handling and sanitation. Elias of AI's Custom Caterers, however, believes a manual is a vital part of teaching his employees good sanitation, food handling and housekeeping practices. His retarded employees, who perform some of the repetitive tasks, receive hygiene training from local agencies in the area.

When a manual is impractical, proper sanitation and food handling practices should be clearly posted. With the large numbers of foreign speaking individuals entering foodservice, signs may be needed in appropriate foreign languages.

In conclusion . . .

The detailed precautions and planning it takes to avoid an outbreak of foodborne illness will show up in the profit column with increased business.

"Word gets around," says Elias. "If you're not using the proper food handling equipment or your operation is unclean, the local sanitarians know. In a large city, for example, government agencies or big corporations may look to the sanitarian for advice on whom to hire for a large catered event."

And at smaller gatherings, people know each other. When they get ill, they compare notes. And the problem quickly comes back to haunt the caterer. In conclusion, no caterer can afford an outbreak of food poisoning.

CORPORATE CATERING

Three Ways To Go

by Celeste McCall



The catering business is booming, and leading the list of customers are corporations. No longer dominated by social affairs, such as weddings, anniversaries and bar mitzvahs, more than 80 percent of today's catering business appears to be geared to corporate clients. But with this shift in emphasis comes increased competition.

"To survive, you need the corporate market," says Holly Safford of the Catered Affair, whose business, located outside Boston, is 75 percent corporate. "Otherwise, you would have to rely on social catering, which is very seasonal."

The corporate market is segmented . . .

There are several ways to tap the

corporate market, depending on the level of catering a corporation desires. Generally speaking, catering involves several levels of entertaining, and each level carries with it a separate set of marketing strategies, approaches, client expectations, styles and types of food served and, of course, profit potentials.

Jay Treadwell, general manager of Ridgewells Caterers, located in Bethesda, MD, outside of Washington, DC, defined those catering strata in a speech delivered at NRA's conference on off-premise catering last fall. Treadwell described the three catering segments as shallow, mid-level and deep with most functions falling within the shallow category. At the bottom (shallow) level, Treadwell says the corporate function is likely to be a low-budget, on-premise company breakfast or lunch. The profit margin for such a service is low, and the client is charged about \$6 to \$10 per person. However, the number of people served often is high, and the

meals are likely to be light and simple.

Chicken, fish and vegetables are more popular for low-level events than heavier foods, such as steak or roast beef. The Catered Affair caters many low-level company lunches. "Many offices don't have kitchen facilities," Safford points out. "So I just deliver hot casseroles." One popular combination features chicken, spinach and Swiss cheese.

How to make contact in "shallow" functions . . .

To garner this basic market, Safford takes the direct approach. She drives into Boston, finds a likely office building and leaves literature, including a special corporate menu, with the front desk.

"I got my first break with a distinguished Boston law firm," she recalls. "I was able to do a job on short notice, and we developed a very nice association. Through that association we established credibility in the Bos-

Celeste McCall is a freelance writer who contributes regularly to the food section of the Washington Times.

ton corporate market. Networking—people-to-people and corporate-to-corporate contact—got us launched.”

Safford also advocates joining professional organizations to build corporate contacts.

Dorothy Krupnick, who with her husband, Paul, runs Gourmet Catering, Inc., in New York City, also believes in the direct approach. “To get prospective clients, I knock on doors, use contacts and do tremendous follow up with mailed material and phone calls. These tactics often culminate in appointments.”

Krupnick also peruses major regional publications, including listings of senior management officials and editors of corporations, media organizations and public relations firms. To those officials she sends printed information, along with a box of homemade chocolate truffles to “sweeten the potential.” It works, she says.

Once a client is enticed, Gourmet Catering relies on a simple but clever means to assure repeat busi-

ness. “We slap a small, tasteful label on each delivery platter. If the customer likes the food, he knows where it is from,” the Krupnicks say.

Besides being simple, low-level or “shallow,” catering jobs are apt to be spur-of-the-moment affairs, allowing little lead time, often not more than 48 hours. Treadwell emphasizes the importance of on-time performance for these jobs, particularly for a relatively short luncheon.

“If a business meeting allocates an hour and a half for lunch and the caterer shows up a half hour late, he might as well forget it. He won’t be hired back.”

How to penetrate the mid-level market . . .

Next up the scale in the corporate catering market is the mid-level affair, which more than likely will be an executive luncheon or reception held in the company building. Often those events are centered around the welcoming of a new executive or the con-

struction of a new building. Treadwell advises caterers to be on the lookout for wrecking balls—the demolition of a structure means the construction of a new one—and the unveiling of a new product or concept. Corporations know that food can be used as an effective selling tool.

Other mid-level corporate happenings that might require a caterer include: farewell parties for executives, carry-in meals for filming sites (especially in New York or Los Angeles), entertaining of clients, an open house, a public relations event and, of course, seasonal business happenings, including company picnics and the perennial office Christmas party.

Those functions are less likely to be short-notice jobs than the shallow-level ones. Lead time can be up to two months. Generally speaking, mid-level receptions will require modest but good hot and cold hors d’oeuvres along with an open bar. Popular standbys, such as roast beef and shrimp, should be balanced with

Cementing the caterer/client bond

by **Michael A. Roman**

Today off-premise catering is considered by many foodservice professionals to be the fastest growing segment of the foodservice community. In addition to the continued growth of social and corporate caterers, many restaurants, gourmet food stores, hospitals, schools, hotels, nursing homes, department stores, business and industry food contractors and others have already begun, or are preparing to begin, to offer off-premise catering to their customers.

When a foodservice operation decides to offer off-premise catering to its present customers, concerns usually quickly arise about the necessity and importance of utilizing contracts, and securing deposits.

Contracts—the “blueprint” . . .

A basic reason to have a contract

Michael A. Roman is president of the National Institute for Off-Premise Catering and The Mixing Bowl, Ltd., both located in Chicago, IL.

for off-premise catering is to provide a vehicle for explaining the mutual and specific obligations being created between the client and the caterer.

In the daily business of a restaurant, for example, contracts are obviously not needed. After all, the restaurant patron’s daily food and beverage selections are spontaneous in nature and do not require a binding contract due to the nominal amount of costs involved.

However, when the same restaurant patron uses the off-premise catering department of a restaurant to entertain 100 guests in his or her home to celebrate an anniversary or wedding, the stakes are much higher because of the complexity of the decisions, the importance of the event to the customer and the total amount of money that is being spent. A catered wedding today will often cost in excess of \$5,000 and will represent one of the family’s major purchases.

The need for total understanding between yourself and your client is important to you as well since you are leaving your own foodservice facility with food, staff and equipment and entering an unfamiliar party location

that has not been selected by you and one that will be filled with unlimited surprises and challenges. A catering contract, when used correctly, will provide a “blueprint” detailing your client’s wishes as well as a “road map” permitting your staff to succeed with the catered affair since they will know all the specifics that have previously been agreed upon.

What form should a contract take? . . .

While there are many different approaches to the form a catering contract may take, most contracts seem to fall into three types. First, there is the formal written contract that is signed by both parties before it is finalized. Second is a more informal contract that is in a written form, usually a series of letters, but does not require a formal signing. Third is the verbal contract that utilizes a handshake form of finalization.

There is no general agreement among caterers whether a contract should be firmly written and signed by both parties or be more casual in nature.

Many operators believe that a

something unusual, perhaps the year's "in food." This year it might be creamy goat cheese or steamed baby vegetables.

"Business people have gotten away from heavy meat-and-potatoes lunches," Safford notes. For mid-level functions, The Catered Affair often relies on ragouts (peasant stews), which Safford sometimes makes with veal and artichokes and serves with foccacia (olive bread). Also popular are entrees such as "Merry Old Sole," sole fillet with scallops, shrimp and crabmeat bound with mozzarella cheese and served with Hollandaise sauce. Suitable for lunch or dinner, those meals run about \$17 per person. Most caterers charge from \$10 to \$20 a head, including food, beverages and labor, for mid-level affairs.

Deep-level functions are image builders . . .

At the top of the ladder is the deep-level function, which is usually the

"image-building" reception or dinner. Such affairs are posh, and often hosted by corporation executives or corporation lobbyists for influential clients or associates.

Price is seldom an object in these affairs, and the profit potential is greater than for other types of catering. On the other hand, deep-level functions require a lot more work, planning and, of course, cash outlay, which is not always recouped at the time of the event. Since corporations usually have a billing cycle, payment can take anywhere from seven days to two months. Deposits are also uncommon.

An example of opulent, deep-level catering was a gourmet-quality, sit-down dinner for 38 bank executives crafted by Gourmet Catering.

The party was hosted by a large bank insurance company, and the entire package included rental of a turn-of-the-century Manhattan mansion, hot and cold hors d'oeuvres, an open bar with top brands, and a dinner

served with fine china and glittering crystal. The menu included linguine with shrimp and leeks, veal stuffed with spinach and chanterelles, several vegetables, a salad with arugula and watercress and an apple and honey vinaigrette, a chocolate chestnut mousse served with raspberry sauce and creme Anglais, fine wines, brandies and cigars.

Gourmet Catering provided 15 staffers—almost two per guest—along with a pianist, a harpist and a \$600 floral arrangement, which afterwards was placed in the limousine of the host and his wife. The tab came to \$300 per person.

Needless to say, most catering jobs, even so-called "deep" or high level ones are hardly this swank. High-level jobs begin as low as \$25 per person and escalate, depending on the needs of a client. For example, a meal could be catered on a chartered jet, and the cost of the rental would be figured into the per person charge.

signed contract provides their company with a firmer sale. Others maintain that the signed contract often gets in the way of the client's relationship with the company. I personally have found that there is a need for both styles of contracts, and that the resulting flexibility brings peace of mind to both the client and the operator.

Whatever form or forms a company may use, the single most important factor is clarification! The client should not be able to say to the company, "I didn't know that I was responsible for . . ." or "Nobody told me that . . ."

List of basic elements . . .

While your attorney should have the final word on the formation, style and content of the contract you decide to use, here are a few of the basic elements that should be included in a catering contract:

- the specific date and day of the week of the catering event
- the specific location of the event
- the specific time the catering event starts and ends
- complete menu and beverage selections
- guaranteed number of guests to be served
- an itemized summary of projected

actual costs

- an itemized summary of possible extra costs
- explanation of cancellation and refund policy
- explanation of deposit policy
- clarification of client's responsibility for damages or losses and
- explanation of payment terms.

Deposits finalize a contract . . .

Should your catering department require deposits? The answer is to be found in your own attitudes and business beliefs. Most operators are convinced that a deposit provides greater control over the situation and a cushion against a client's last-minute cancellation or dispute over the billing.

Other operators believe just as strongly that a deposit is not required or is not possible from certain clients. They point to the friendly and long-established relationship between their clients and the company.

While this friendly feeling has merit in some cases, the reality of the marketplace requires that most operators actively obtain deposits to place a finalization element to a contract. When a deposit is received, the company knows that the intentions of the client are honorable and, therefore, the event can be officially "booked."

Clients often appreciate deposits as well since in their minds a deposit locks in the caterer and assures that all of the mutual obligations will be performed.

Deposits help with cash flow . . .

Deposits also are an integral part of a total cash management program. They create cash flow that enables a caterer to purchase necessary raw material for the event.

Obviously, the amount of deposits required will vary from situation to situation. However, in general, deposits range from 25 percent to 80 percent of the final bill. The amount requested usually depends on the length of time needed for billing and payment. Corporate clients often require 30 to 60 days to process their bills.

Contracts are the glue that forms the bond of understanding, confidence and trust between the client and the caterer. It's quite normal for anniversaries, weddings and bar mitzvahs to be planned 8 to 14 months in advance of the actual catering date. It is during this long period that some elements of the original agreement are forgotten and can result in a confused and troubled client. The use of a contract will usually prevent misunderstanding and help bridge the time gap. □

Contacts required . . .

Going after the top market requires more than persistence. You need contacts. And many contacts come from previously successful catering engagements.

For "deep" or high-level catering jobs, Safford relies on direct sales, making initial contact over the phone. (A caterer's telephone manner is very important; success is often determined by the first few seconds on the phone.) Safford then follows up with mailed material, including a special menu.

"We get a lot of repeat business," Safford adds. "We become familiar with the building of our clients (such as the location of electrical outlets), and we learn their habits and tastes, for example, which of them likes wine with dinner."

"It is also important to follow up with a phone call after a catering event. Ask if the food and service could be improved. Did something fall through the cracks? A caterer should know right away. Also, try not to say "no." For example, if a customer calls for a catering job and you turn him down because you are busy, he will call someone else and you will lose his business."

How can a caterer handle several

jobs simultaneously? Gourmet Catering, which has only one delivery truck, handles the problem by hiring a courier service. Since much of its business consists of simple carry-in lunches for Manhattan firms (sandwiches, salads, desserts and beverages), and everyone wants lunch at 12:30, Krupnick simply pays a messenger to deliver the lunch. He passes the cost—about \$16—on to the client.

Like Gourmet Catering and The Catered Affair, other small firms have also earned their slice of the corporate pie.

Small firms earn their slice of the corporate pie . . .

Busy Day Gourmet, a small, three-person catering operation based in Murrysville, PA, a suburb of Pittsburgh, has successfully tapped the corporate market.

Now in its fourth year of business, Busy Day Gourmet, the brainchild of Judy Spitler, Pearl Smith and Dotty Kocur, has attracted prestigious clients, such as IBM and Westinghouse.

How has that trio been able to compete with the large-volume catering firms? "First of all, you have to offer a quality product," says partner Pearl Smith. "We are unique in the Murrysville area in that we offer

gourmet items which are otherwise not available unless you drive to Pittsburgh. One thing we keep in mind is that people like eye appeal. Everything we do is hand-garnished. We carve vegetables, such as carrot tulips and tomato roses.

"We also like to introduce new items for our customers to try, such as garlic Parmesan rolls instead of the regular clover-shaped dinner rolls," adds Smith.

How does a relatively small catering firm like Busy Day Gourmet, while insisting on freshly made quality gourmet fare, still manage to come out in the black? "You have to set your price," says Smith. "People will look at our \$6-per-dozen hors d'oeuvres charge and say 'Wow! That's expensive!' But the items are expensive because they are hard to make."

"In catering (corporate or otherwise) you have to take the risk that the public might say no. If the public does reject an item, you simply have to remove it from your menu. It is deadwood."

"On the other hand, if a customer is accustomed to an item, he or she won't want to switch, even if it is expensive. You have to find out what the public will bear. For example, our gourmet turkey breast is expensive, but the public likes it. We had to up the price three times last year and no one blinked."

Ways to tap corporate catering

First, a caterer needs a good program to offer a corporation. Then the caterer must develop ways to communicate that program to prospective customers. To tap the "deep" or high-level catering market, provide a four-color brochure that emphasizes the caterer's strengths and specialties. Other effective techniques include

- getting the word out through direct mail efforts; be sure your business card looks professional
- adding special menus in your information packet that are geared to corporations
- investing in media advertising to regularly keep your name before the public
- building recognition with off-beat events; one caterer sponsors con-

tests, such as a chili cook-off for corporate vice presidents

- tapping the lucrative convention business; get to know the sales managers of local convention hotels in your area, perhaps through a local hotel association if your town has one; while a hotel will not send a guest to a competitive hotel, it might contact an off-premise caterer for a function
- joining your local chamber of commerce and/or convention bureau, where you can learn about out-of-towners who are having meetings in your area and who might need a caterer
- studying the directories in office buildings; walk in and talk to the receptionists; whatever you do, always leave a press kit, even if you have to leave it with the receptionist and
- joining professional organizations where you can meet corporate officers and other influential people.

What corporations look for . . .

What does a corporation look for in a caterer? Richard Ysmal, corporate director of food services for Motorola, a multi-national high tech industry, replies, "The philosophies of the caterer and corporation have to mesh. That is, both would have to adhere to the same specific standards."

"It depends on what kind of function we want," says IBM spokesperson Kathy Riemer from her Chicago office. "Our events range from fairly casual to formal. However, it is a given that we look for very good service, flexibility, quality and punctuality. Sometimes—not always—uniqueness is a plus. For example, we might have a kick-off meeting with a theme, such as the Olympics, and we would want health-type refreshments."

Chicago caterer Michael Roman of the Mixing Bowl sums it up: "Dependability—that includes the food, presentation and style. A corporation cannot be embarrassed." □

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1984 annual operating ratio report now available (Aug., p.39)



by Elyse Cuttler

When you hear the names Al's Bar and Grill, Burger King, El Torito or The Fish House, what do you think of? Can you picture the type of establishment and the type of food served? Chances are you can, and you will probably be right on the mark.

But what about Nippers, Little Red Riding Hood's, earth by april or The Pirates' House? What can you expect from these establishments? What kind of food do they serve?

Naming restaurants is not always an easy task. Many owners put a lot of time into this process. Yet others come with a name right at the start.

Building on a nickname . . .

When Horatio Lonsdale-Hands and Arthur van Wiesenberger set out to name their operation, they already knew whom they wanted to attract. The establishment was to be a limited menu concept, serving only champagne, caviar and indulgences, such as foie gras, Brie and chocolate cake. The atmosphere was to be fun—promoting dancing, laughter and good conversation. The two partners had grown up enjoying these things, having been schooled in Europe with vacations in Switzerland. They wished

Match the restaurant name in the left column with the appropriate origin in the right column.

Restaurant name

1. Nippers
2. Houlihan's Old Place
3. Little Red Riding Hood's
4. earth by april
5. The Sardine Factory
6. An Affair to Remember
7. Fedora's
8. Maggie Mae's Road House
9. Plaza III
10. The Good Food Company
11. The Pirates' House
12. Maggie Mae's Creek House
13. Maggie Mae's Sport n' House
14. Bristol Bar & Grill

Origin of name

- A. Inspired by a poem by e. e. cummings
- B. Identified with cherished thoughts of a catered event
- C. Named after a haberdashery
- D. Takes its name from a popular hat in Italy
- E. Located on Wolf Road
- F. Features wholesome, natural foods
- G. Based on a Robert Louis Stevenson story
- H. Located in a converted bordello
- I. Named for the three executives who started the company
- J. Named after the dog on old RCA label
- K. Brings back memories of early days on Cannery Row
- L. Features 50s and 60s music
- M. Identified with an English seaport
- N. Named after a tavern in Ithaca, NY

Answers: 1.(J); 2.(C); 3.(E); 4.(A); 5.(G); 6.(B); 7.(D); 8.(L); 9.(I); 10.(F); 11.(K); 12.(N); 13.(M); 14.(H)



to bring this lifestyle to California.

"The name had to be something distinct and memorable, but it also had to convey a certain meaning to our customers," says Lonsdale-Hands. "It had to be something they could identify with."

"My partner's nickname (Arthur von Wiesenberger) is Nippers, after the snappy little dog on the old RCA logo. His father invested in RCA stock in the early days," explains Lonsdale-Hands, "and we decided that Nippers would be a memorable name."

And, indeed, it was. With 133 brands of champagne to choose from, entertainers, young up-and-comers and the beautiful people all turned out to make Nippers their home-away-from-home. Billed as a "dancing and drinking establishment open to ladies and gentlemen only," Nippers quickly built a loyal following. Success prompted the two entrepreneurs to open a second Nippers in the posh Beverly Hills location of Rodeo Drive.

Nipper's

"I wouldn't say the name is the most important aspect of the business, but I think it has helped us. I don't think we would have the same effect if we chose Grandma's as our name," he concludes.

Chancing upon a name . . .

Sometimes the perfect name is a result of a fortunate coincidence as it was for John Fulcher, owner of Little Red Riding Hood's Restaurant in Geneseo, IL. "What would you name a restaurant on Wolf Road?" he asks.

The fairy tale name seemed a natural for this family-oriented restaurant located on a country road. "The name is certainly memorable. And if customers forget the address, all they have to do is think for a minute, and it will come to them," jokes Fulcher.

The name led to the restaurant's theme, which is evident throughout the restaurant, from the large, framed Little Red Riding Hood pictures on the walls and the small, stuffed, gray wolf dressed in grandmother's clothes to the cute costumes worn by all the waitresses. The menu, too, depicts the story with such selections as "the wolf's breakfast," "grandma's special" and "Red's basket of chicken."

"Adults enjoy the enchantment as much as the kids," he says.

Starting with a concept . . .

Instead of suggesting a theme, a name can be an outgrowth of a concept. That's what happened when Carol Patrick opened her restaurant, The Good Food Company in Morgan Hills, CA. "I've been in the business for 27 years, working in all areas of foodservice," she explains. "I knew that when I opened my own restaurant, it would have to contain the kind of food I wanted to eat—good food. The name was a definite outgrowth of that concept."

The Good Food Company has established quite a reputation for its wholesome, natural products with very little prepared items. Patrick's success has spawned a second Good Food Company as well as a catering operation called An Affair to Remember. The name was another of Patrick's ideas and bears no connection to the vintage movie of the same name.

"I tried to stay away from common names. I thought 'When someone has an event catered, they want to remember that occasion,' so An Affair to Remember seemed appropriate."

Saved by a poem . . .

For some, however, naming a restaurant is not that easy.

Leonard Horowitz claims that a poem by e. e. cummings saved the day when he was planning his restaurant in 1973. Horowitz's establishment was opening in the college town of Cleveland Heights, OH, just outside of Cleveland, and the cuisine was to be strictly vegetarian.

"I wanted to name the restaurant Food for Thought," he recalls, "but then I decided against it."

Three days before the restaurant was scheduled to open, Horowitz still hadn't come up with a name. He began to look through books of poetry when he read a poem by e. e. cummings that struck him. One of the

little red riding hood's Restaurant

lines contained the words "earth by april," and Horowitz decided that would be the name of the restaurant.

"Many people have asked me about the name," he says. "It seemed to fit the establishment at the time. The entire poem is printed on the back of the menu."

Throughout the years, the restaurant has matured and changed, as has the woodsy college type who once frequented the place. "The restaurant is more upscale than it was in the past. I've added seafood and veal dishes to the menu to cater to a broader spectrum of the dining-out public," explains Horowitz. But Horowitz won't change the name because it has become synonymous with the restaurant.

Inspired by historical fiction . . .

History and historical fiction can also be the inspiration for a restaurant's name and theme.

The Pirates' House in the seaport town of Savannah, GA, is one example of this naming tradition. The restaurant served as an inn for visiting sailors in the mid-18th century. It was then that it became known as the Pirates' House. Rumor has it that Captain Flint of *Treasure Island* fame died in the building and that his ghost still haunts the place.

Herb Traub, owner of the Pirates' House, is dedicated to preserving all the historical artifacts that adorn the many dining rooms. Ships' bells, saddle hooks, fish nets, old cutlasses,



model schooners and even Captain Flint's wooden leg are seen by the nearly 1,000 guests who pass through the restaurant each day.

"The name has historical significance, and customers are curious about the 18th century memorabilia they find here," he explains.

In a similar vein, author John Steinbeck's immortalized Cannery Row is the setting of a restaurant in Monterey, CA.



The Sardine Factory, a distinctive dining establishment, is not what it was in a previous era. "The operation was named after the first restaurant on Cannery Row to feed the sardine workers," explains owner Ted Balestreri, who is also NRA's vice president.

He goes on to explain that when the restaurant first opened in 1968, customers were initially a little confused by the name and then pleasantly surprised by what they found. The atmosphere is elegant, and the establishment quickly became known as one of the most famous restaurants in the country.

Balestreri is quick to admit, however, that the name itself does not depict the restaurant image. "But," he notes, "most customers who haven't read Steinbeck and are visiting the area will immediately realize what Cannery Row means."

Expanding on a good idea . . .

When an operator has more than one establishment, it is important that each has a separate identity, although they may all be connected by a common theme.

Dan Fleck of 43 Skdoo Corporation (Maggie Mae's) in Pittsburgh, PA, has successfully named three restaurants. The first step was to determine the market—in this case, young adults. The names all echo that orientation.

Questions you should ask before choosing a name

Consultants engaged in restaurant planning recommend that restaurateurs ask themselves the following questions before choosing a name.

- Whom do I want to attract to my establishment?
- What is the age, income and education of these individuals?
- What type of service will be offered? Upscale? Casual? Full service? Limited menu?
- What kind of food will be featured? Expanded appetizer menu with finger foods? Nouvelle cuisine? American regional?
- How do I want customers to perceive the establishment? As a fun place? As a place to bring business associates? As a place to have an intimate dinner for two?
- Will menu descriptions be lengthy or simply worded?
- How will the menu be designed? Will it have daily inserts? Will it be handwritten? Will it be printed in two colors or four colors?
- What will be the average check size?

"Susan (Fleck's wife) and I sat at our kitchen and wrote down names we believed would fit in with that clientele," Fleck recalls. "My favorite was Willy and Archie's Bar and Grill but Susan liked the name she came up with—Maggie Mae's. Initially, I didn't like that name because it reminded me of Rod Stewart (the rock star of the 70s) and the restaurant would feature 50s and 60s music."

However, Dan Fleck finally relented and the restaurant became known as Maggie Mae's Road House—because it is located on an outlying road in a suburban community.

The next two restaurants that Fleck opened were a continuation of the original Maggie Mae's concept. "Our second restaurant is an old Victorian house that sits on the bank of a creek. Susan and I met at a tavern in Ithaca, NY (Cornell University) called the Creek House so I decided to name

the restaurant Maggie Mae's Creek House."

Fleck kept the Maggie Mae's prefix because he wanted customers to associate one restaurant with the other—although the Creek House is a little more upscale than the Road House. Explains Fleck, "The Maggie Mae's concept became very successful, memorable, in fact, and I didn't want to lose that identity."

When the third restaurant was about to open on the north side of Pittsburgh in an area that was formerly a red light district, Fleck's idea was to decorate the establishment to resemble a bordello. The name: Maggie Mae's Sport 'n House. This restaurant appeals to the same type of clientele as the other two. "It's important to carry over the commonality from one establishment to the next," says Fleck, "but each must have its own flavor, and that should be reflected in the name."

Establishing separate identities . . .

In contrast, the Gilbert/Robinson Corporation, Kansas City, MO, set out to establish each of its restaurant concepts with a separate identity.

One establishment, Houlihan's Old Place, got its name because it occupied a building where a haberdashery was located for many years. The theme of the restaurant was to be fun, and the decor depicted this theme right down to the menu descriptions. Now that restaurant has expanded into many locations around the country. The company is slowly dropping the "Old Place" part of the name, because it doesn't want its customers to associate oldness with its restaurants.

Another Gilbert/Robinson restaurant that is primarily a seafood establishment was named The Bristol Bar & Grill after the city in England famous for its seafood.

The Plaza III concept, an upscale establishment, was named for the three executives that started Gilbert/Robinson, (Gilbert Sr. and Jr. and Paul Robinson).

And Fedora's, a restaurant with a European flair and whimsical overtones, was named after a soft felt hat popular in Italy.

"The names were chosen in most cases after the target market was set," explains a company spokesperson. "When we were definite on that variable, we were able to think about the name, not vice versa." □

RESTAURANT COOKBOOKS ENTER A GOLDEN AGE

by Toni Lydecker

Of the 50 people listed in "Who's Who in American Cooking," published recently by *The Cook's Magazine*, 30 are restaurant owners, chefs or both. This impressive statistic gives an inkling of the pervasive influence of innovative restaurateurs in creating a uniquely American cuisine. In many cases, knowledge of their culinary discoveries has not come from the confines of their restaurants alone. It has spread to food lovers across the country through meticulously compiled, beautifully illustrated cookbooks.

Promoting the combination of classic French cuisine with American ingredients and ingenuity is Alice Waters, owner of Chez Panisse in Berkeley, CA. She has followed up her highly successful *Chez Panisse Menu Cookbook* with one on pasta, pizza and calzone, and plans for other cookbooks are underway. Similarly, Paul Prudhomme, owner of K-Paul's Louisiana Kitchen in New Orleans, LA, has vastly enlarged the audience for Cajun and Creole dishes through the recent publications of *Chez Paul Prudhomme's Louisiana Kitchen*.

Toni Lydecker is a free-lance writer in the Washington, DC, area who frequently writes on foodservice topics for NRA NEWS.

Working with a cooking tradition going back 200 years, Prudhomme has created fascinating variations on grand themes, such as crawfish etouffee, gumbos and jambalayas.

Sometimes the impetus for a cookbook is not to push back culinary frontiers but to celebrate a restaurant's illustrious past through publishing its most prized recipes. This is certainly true in the case of *The Russian Tea Room Cookbook*, which traces the growth of a small tea and pastry shop established in New York City in the 1920's into a famous restaurant known as much for its celebrity clientele as for its food.

Carol Schneider, publicity director for Random House, which publishes the *Chez Panisse* cookbooks, thinks that this may well be a golden age for the restaurant cookbook. "It's no longer a matter of the best French chef in a certain city putting together a book. The celebration of American cuisine, based on regional dishes, has spawned more imaginative restaurant cookbooks in the past few years—many of them written by chefs bred and trained in this country," she says.

Not every restaurant has the potential to produce a blockbuster cookbook, of course. In fact, as Schneider points out, "The competition among cookbooks is very intense. For this to be a productive enterprise, the restaurant must first be recognized as hav-

ing something unique or new to offer. Otherwise, the book will be lost in the market—if it gets published at all."

Even when a cookbook fails to hit the bestseller list, many restaurants find that it has paid for itself by promoting interest in the restaurant and its cuisine. Many restaurateurs are finding that a collection of their best recipes not only pleases customers but also finds its way into a broader local or regional market. A cookbook can also perk up the morale of chefs and other staff involved in its cre-



ation, as long as the work is relegated to times when the normal business of the restaurant is relatively slack and appropriate credit is given to staff contributors.

Responding to customer requests . . .

Often the incentive for compiling the cookbook is practical: to respond to repeated customer requests for recipes and, sometimes, for more information about the restaurant itself. Appropriately, Sound Food Restaurant and Bakery in Vashon, WA, entitled its 39-recipe cookbook *Recherche' Recipes* (the first word translates from the French as "sought out, asked for again"). Owner Gwen Palmer likes "promoting the idea that people can use our approach to cooking with fresh foods in their own homes." Half of the 2,000 copies in the initial printing have sold through the restaurant and two other local sales outlets, and Palmer hopes to distribute the book as well in nearby Seattle, where the restaurant has a loyal following.

Choosing the recipes . . .

The theme of the cookbook determines the selection of recipes. Often the theme can be expressed simply as "the restaurant's best (or more famous) recipes." This works well only when the restaurant's cuisine has a strong unifying theme or philosophy.

For instance, the menu of Sound Food Restaurant and Bakery focuses on from-scratch dishes made of fresh foods. Its systematic approach to choosing the 39 recipes most popular

over the past five years included not only soliciting the impressions of staff but also surveying customers to find out which ones they would like to see in print.

The most thoughtfully conceived cookbooks often have an emphasis quite distinct from that of the restaurant's menu. The Russian Tea Room serves the whole gamut of traditional American foods, but its cookbook singles out only Russian recipes from

"It is often the supplementary material that determines the style of the cookbook."

the menu. Owner Faith Stewart-Gordon explains in the introduction: "This is not a diet cookbook or quick-preparation cookbook. Here we want to make traditional and classical Russian recipes . . . available to the home cook."

Narrowing the theme by selecting only one or two categories of food is especially appropriate when the restaurant hopes to publish several cookbooks. While the first Chez Panisse cookbook included recipes from every part of the menu, the second one focused only on pizza, pasta and calzone; and future cookbooks are likely to have a similarly narrow focus. Breads, desserts, one-dish meals and appetizers are just a few of the menu categories that might warrant treatment in separate cookbooks.

Restaurants contemplating the publication of a cookbook usually welcome the idea of sharing recipes. "I've never said 'no' when someone asked for a recipe. A restaurant is more than recipes—people will come whether or not they know how to make the food themselves," says Kenneth Koock of Green Pastures Restaurant in Austin, TX. Nonetheless, a restaurant has the right, without apology, to hold back a few recipes even from its own cookbook. Tony Vallone, who is currently writing a cookbook for Tony's in Houston, TX, says some sauces and certain seasonings served at Tony's will remain classified information and cites a white seafood sauce served over pasta as a recipe not to be given out. When answering a customer request, he sometimes softens the refusal by offering a similar recipe but adds, "I always emphasize that the substitute is different from what they have tasted in the restaurant."

Adapting recipes to home kitchens . . .

"A Mozart symphony recorded by five different orchestras sounds different every time. It is the same with food—a different cook with the same ingredients will produce different nuances in taste," says Chef Louis Szathmary, owner of The Bakery in Chicago, IL, and successful author of five cookbooks, including *The Bakery Restaurant Cookbook*. Nonetheless, through careful and patient testing, a restaurant can and must make sure that such variations in recipes are minor—for all the goodwill a restaura-

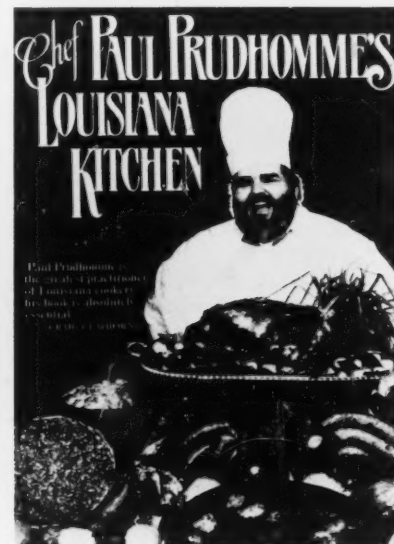


DINING IN-HOUSTON

A Collection of Gourmet Recipes
From Houston's Finest Restaurants



By Rona Abbott and Ann Criswell
With A Foreword by Robert T. Schuchman



rant cookbook aims to promote can go down the drain if the recipes do not work.

A restaurant that already possesses a well-organized file of detailed recipes has an excellent head start on producing a cookbook, but much work remains to be done. Nika Hazelton, a professional writer who collaborated with owner Faith Stewart-Gordon in writing *The Russian Tea Room Cookbook*, points out that

"The most thoughtfully conceived cookbooks often have an emphasis quite distinct from the restaurant's menu."

changing proportions from restaurant quantities to those appropriate for a family or small party of guests is an arduous task. "The job is not simply a mathematical reduction; a constant adjustment of ingredients, seasoning and cooking times is needed for a proper reproduction of the original dishes," she says in the introduction. After observing the chefs and taking notes on their work, she tested the recipes repeatedly by herself, with home economists and with home cooks.

Many cookbooks designed for the home cook fail because the recipes were tested in the restaurant kitchen, according to Chef Louis. Like many other authors of restaurant cookbooks, he does his testing at home.

That seemed inconvenient to Paul Prudhomme of K-Paul's Louisiana Kitchen, so he and an assistant, Paulette Rittenberg, set up a test kitchen adjacent to the restaurant kitchen. It is equipped with a home stove and thin-bottomed pots and pans most commonly used in homes. To reproduce other conditions under which a home cook works, they buy all ingredients from supermarkets, not from restaurant suppliers. As Rittenberg explains, the beautiful results that can be achieved with prime cuts of meat and cream with a high butterfat content are irrelevant if the reader cannot obtain ingredients of that caliber.

Rittenberg describes how the pair worked in the kitchen to test the recipes in *Chef Paul Prudhomme's Louisiana Kitchen*: "Chef Paul cooked

Recipes can be short and simple . . .

Vegetarian Chile (2 quarts)

3 cups pinto beans, soaked overnight
3 qt. water

1 large onion, chopped
1 green pepper, chopped
1 T. oil
2 T. chile powder
2 t. granulated garlic
1 T. salt
½ t. ground clove
dash cayenne
2 cups tomato puree
2 cups sliced tomatoes in juice
½ t. Tabasco

Bring beans to boil in covered pot. Reduce heat and cook 1 hr. or until tender.
Saute vegetables in oil until onions are limp.

Add spices and saute briefly.

Add tomatoes, etc., and cooked beans in their liquid. Simmer 1-2 hrs. until slightly thickened and flavors have blended.

—from *Recherche' Recipes*, published by Sound Food Restaurant and Bakery, Vashon, WA.

while I wrote everything down, asked questions and forced him to measure everything. Sometimes we did a recipe two or three times before he was happy. Then I retested it alone to make sure I got the same results." Food made according to a recipe that passed muster for the cookbook was

"Many cookbooks designed for the home cook fail because the recipes were tested in the restaurant kitchen."

served that day to customers; despite the differences in raw ingredients, the dishes were up to par with the food served in the restaurant.

Determining the style with supplementary material . . .

The lion's share of work is done once a restaurateur has settled on a theme, selected interesting and appropriate recipes and tested them thoroughly. Now is the time to polish and organize the recipes and write supplementary material, such as explanatory notes and the introduction. It is often the supplementary material that determines the style of the cookbook as the restaurant's convictions

about food and cooking and assumptions about the audience begin to come across.

The Pirates' House Cookbook, for example, is written with the novice cook in mind. "We wanted to give every detail to make sure the reader who follows directions will get a finished product essentially the same as the dish served in the restaurant," says Owner Herb Traub of The Pirates' House in Savannah, GA. In addition to spelling out each procedure in detail, recipes often smooth the cook's path by including prepared products, such as onion soup mix and chocolate wafers.

In contrast, Alice Waters does not dot every "i" and cross every "t" for readers of her cookbooks. In the introduction to *The Chez Panisse Menu Cookbook*, she says: "My style of cooking involves combining ingredients that harmonize because of their quality, freshness, aroma and flavor. If you should encounter an unfamiliar technique or process in these recipes, it is the simplest thing in the world to check any of the procedurally oriented cookbooks." She encourages readers to improvise both in executing specific recipes and in planning menus. Although the execution of a recipe is usually not complicated, Waters sets exacting standards for the selection of ingredients. Readers who cannot come up with tiny eggplants, cranberry beans and fresh fennel

even after visiting every specialty shop in town are encouraged to grow their own.

Paul Prudhomme offers readers a great deal of information about cooking methods and the reasons for using them. He has organized his recipes with the easier ones at the beginning of each section. Encouraging readers with characteristic heartiness to "jump right in the skillet," Prudhomme guides them in an admirably systematic, thorough way. Still, many recipes of deceptively moderate length call for such ingredients as "basic seafood stock" or "basic pork stock"—separate, time-consuming

"This may will be a golden age for the restaurant cookbook"

preparations also outlined in the book.

Prudhomme adds a lagniappe (the Cajun expression for "a little something extra") at the end of many recipes. There he may explain why stirring a certain sauce does not produce the same effect as shaking the pan back and forth, or that, to a Cajun, a "piquant" sauce is one that "is hot

and hurts like a sticker in your tongue." *The Russian Tea Room Cookbook* is also effective in its use of notes before or after a recipe to offer asides about the origin of a dish, how it is served in the restaurant or tricks for making it succeed. In the note following a recipe for piroshki, for example, the author explains the name of the dish comes from the Russian word for feast, that these turnovers go with soup and that the chief baker in the restaurant makes hundreds every day.

Alternatives to a cookbook . . .

Even a cookbook done on a small scale requires an enormous commitment of time and other resources that can divert attention from the more pressing concerns of running a restaurant.

If producing an entire cookbook seems too ambitious, a restaurant can still share recipes with customers through reproducing them on index cards or sheets of paper. Demonstrations by chefs at cooking schools or kitchenware stores or on television can also draw attention to the high quality of a restaurant's recipes. Co-operating with newspaper food editors and other media that ask for recipes is still another outlet.

Appearing in an anthology, such as *Favorite Restaurant Recipes*, published by Knapp Press, also can generate favorable publicity for the restaurant. Cookbooks containing recipes from a number of restaurants in a certain city offer another route to publication. *Chicago Gourmet*, by Sue Kupcinet and Connie Fish, combines reviews of about two hundred restaurants with several of their chefs' favorite recipes. A full menu, complete with wine suggestions, from each of 21 restaurants is offered in *Dining In—Houston* by Rona Abbott and Ann Criswell.

The disadvantage of participating in this kind of arrangement is that the restaurant or chef has no control over the quality of the book—and, of course, no share in the profits. Although the pattern has been for such books to be organized and marketed by writers and publishers, a group of restaurants might think of sponsoring a cookbook jointly. A collective effort would not only spread out the investment and the labor but also would give the restaurants involved broader distribution than a solo effort normally would. □

Getting your cookbook into print

The restaurant whose cookbook is accepted by a major publishing company can count on editors to clean up the text, artists to add beautiful illustrations and typography and publicity directors to schedule talk show and demonstration tours. More common is the restaurateur who produces a cookbook alone. Here are some pointers for getting a cookbook into print:

1. Assemble a team with the right skills. Cast your net into local staff and friends with skills that could be useful in producing the cookbook. Often a chef will turn out to have a knack for illustration, or the restaurant manager's brother may be a printer who will offer an excellent price. If you are asking staff members to work on the project, relieve them of some regular duties so they can devote adequate time to the cookbook. And make sure the quality of their work meets your standards—if it does not, you are better off hiring outsiders to complete other aspects of the project.

2. Get the recipes right. This is the cornerstone of any good cookbook. It means having at least two people test and record recipes—one to do the food preparation and the other to write down every detail. And it means proofreading the text carefully and critically at each stage of the production process, making certain no errors have crept in and nothing has been omitted.

3. Put the essentials ahead of the

frills. It is better to limit the scope of the cookbook and, within those confines, to do it thoroughly and well than to spread resources too thinly. For example, an accurate index is a must, but beautiful color plates are not necessary to show how to perform a technique or how food should be arranged on a plate. A simple sketch might do almost as well, or a few extra sentences in the recipe could describe the food or procedure in more detail.

4. Choose a good publisher or printer. Find a company you can trust to do a good job. Ask other restaurants and community groups that have produced cookbooks you admire to recommend a publisher or printer. Once the specifications of the job are drawn up, get several bids before making a final commitment. In the case of a publisher, ask whether any help on in-store display boxes, banners and mail order blanks will be forthcoming. (Companies most likely to provide this kind of help are those that specialize in publishing sponsored cookbooks.)

5. Aim for quality, even on a shoe-string budget. Evaluate paper and binding for durability as well as looks—cookbooks must be sturdy to endure the hard use they receive. A good printer will be able to suggest alternatives within the budget that do not scrimp on quality. Often, a soft-cover format can enable the restaurant to set the price at a comfortable level for impulse buying; a spiral binding, on the other hand, is both appropriate for small print orders and attractive to users because the cookbook opens to lie flat.

If you have not already experienced it, at some point in your business life you are likely to be the focus of a media event, either as the central participant in a newsworthy story, as a spokesperson for a particular group speaking on an issue or, conceivably, as a randomly selected group member whom the media targets to get a "person on the street" sense of a particular situation.

The event may be a positive one or it may be negative in the sense that you need to avoid getting trapped into saying something you will later regret. The latter situation simultaneously tests your quick-mindedness and your ability to articulate clearly and concisely.

While volumes of books and numerous articles have been written on how to best conduct oneself during a media interview situation, I have found that keeping a few simple rules in mind can be the best guide and can achieve the maximum desired results.

1. Don't answer hypothetical questions with specific details. Reporters often ask hypothetical questions, such as "What would you do if . . ." or "What would happen if . . ." You can't divine the future, and it is impossible to foresee all the factors that may have a bearing on any given future eventuality. Reporters delight in posing direct, penetrating and incisive questions. This is, in part, how they make their reputations, but that *does not* necessarily obligate you to give a direct answer. Reporters are really after a "revelation of your mind." If you were to answer with specifics and then not abide by your earlier statements, possibly for some very good reasons, at the time an event occurred, the media would return to

Fisher's Law 60

Media mediation

your earlier remarks to suggest hypocrisy or worse.

The best answer in such circumstances is to state, in general terms, the *objectives* that would be sought at the time but which would not relate or suggest *specific* actions since specific actions are dependent on circumstances at the moment. The answer could be phrased in this vein: "If that situation arises, our objective will be to. . . . There would be several approaches, depending on conditions evident at the time." A response that is really a "non-answer" can be an effective response.

2. Always maintain the formality of the relationship in an interview situation. If you have ever watched "Sixty Minutes," you will note that some of the persons interviewed will address the reporter by first name in responding to the reporter's question, with such phrases as, "Well, Mike" or "As you know, Morley." I have found that reporters will often try to endear themselves to their subjects to subtly "break down" resistance, create the impression of a friendly relationship and/or to catch the subject off guard.

Don't let the reporter think you are "vulnerable" to friendship or flattery. You are much better off maintaining formality throughout (for example, "Well, Mr. _____"; or "As you know, Ms. _____"). It's a good discipline for you, and it keeps the reporter at

bay. Keep the formality from start to finish. Even when you think the interview is over, it isn't. Former President Jimmy Carter found that out the hard way when his "lusted in my heart" remark received wide publicity during his campaign. Stay formal. Stay alert. Stay objective.

3. Don't say anything more than you want to or have to. Broadcast media reporters are taught to keep the microphone in front of you even though you have reached a natural stopping point in your comments. Reporters know that most people feel compelled to keep talking when a microphone is in front of them. Don't be caught by such a compulsion as you could blurt out something that would have been better off left unsaid. Say what you want to say or have to say; then leave it. Make the reporter take the next move. Don't let the silence bother you. If nothing is said, the reporter will cut the tape after what you did say, and silence will never "make air time."

4. If you want to be quoted, phrase your remarks so they are brisk, "catchy" and quotable. The media loves to print unique forms of expression, turns or plays on words and "attention grabbers" as they allow for high readership and headline interest. If at all possible, pre-plan what you want to say and condense it to a pithy, capsulized one-liner that pro-

vides the essence of what you want to say. As an example, some years back during the 1974 energy crisis, we received wide media distribution with the remark "with respect to energy, conspicuous conservation is rapidly replacing conspicuous consumption." (The phrase "conspicuous consumption" was coined by Thorstein Veblen in *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, a book with which many journalists are familiar.) The phrase captured the essence of the conservation message we wanted to convey.

5. Put the "best face" on every situation. This is not difficult to do in positive situations, but it should not suggest a Pollyanna attitude. In positive circumstances, an adequate dosage of enthusiasm, mixed with optimism and buoyancy, can cause a disproportionately beneficial contagion. In negative circumstances, concern, determination, sincerity and resolve are the qualities that should be evinced.

6. Don't answer questions that are beyond your knowledge span. This statement sounds self-evident, but it's surprising how easy it is to say something about matters one is not really qualified to address. There is absolutely nothing wrong with saying, "We are in the process of investigating it" or "I am not prepared to speak to that now, but more information will be available later. I'll see that you get it." That's far preferable than getting out on a limb and not being able to get back.

There is more that could be said but Fisher's 60th Law is the gist: **"Manage your media experience like you manage your business. Know your objectives. Control the activities. Focus on results."**

CREST REPORT

September-October-November

**Percent change in
quarterly traffic
(fall 1982—fall 1984)**

Fall Quarter Highlights

- **Customer traffic:** Up 0.4 percent
- **Sales:** Increased 5.8 percent
- **Visit frequency:** Advanced 0.9 percent
- **Average check size:** Up 5.3 percent
- **Restaurant types:**
Quick service customer traffic: Increased 1.4 percent
- Upscale customer traffic: Advanced 0.9 percent
- Midscale customer traffic: Dropped 1.9 percent
- **Meal periods:**
Breakfast customer traffic: Up 6.5 percent
- Dinner customer traffic: Increased 3.0 percent
- Lunch customer traffic: Down 2.6 percent

Customer traffic advances for ninth consecutive quarter . . .

Customer traffic at the nation's restaurants was up for the ninth consecutive quarter during the September-October-November

1982	Fall	0.4%
	Winter	0.5%
	Spring	1.8%
	Summer	3.2%
1983	Fall	5.2%
	Winter	6.2%
	Spring	7.5%
	Summer	2.4%
1984	Fall	0.4%

Note: Percent change is from the same quarter in prior year.

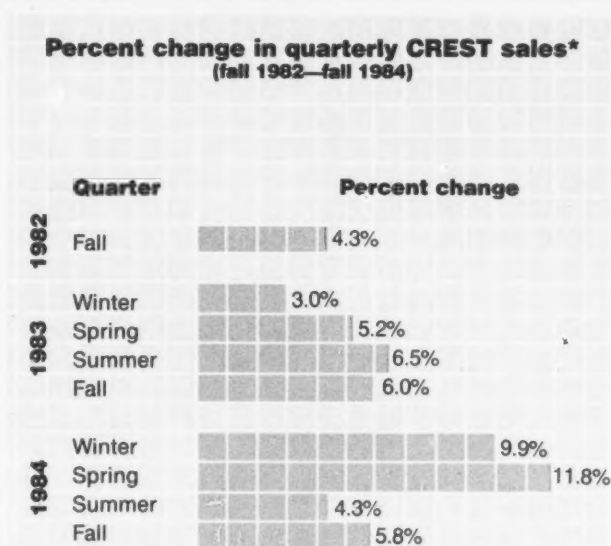
Source: CREST Household Report, CREST NPD Research, Inc.

period, according to CREST's *Household Report*. However, this recent quarter's advance of only 0.4 percent was considerably lower than the 2.4 percent rise posted during the summer period. It was also well below the advances reported in the spring and winter quarters—7.5 percent and 6.2 percent, respectively.

The slowing rate of increase in customer counts can be attributed to moderate economic growth and a more cautious consumer. Although the economy continued to expand, it grew at a less rapid pace than earlier in the year. Real GNP, for example, advanced 2.8 percent during the fourth quarter, somewhat above the third quarter's revised 1.6 percent increase but significantly below gains of 10.1 percent and 7.1 percent in the first and second quarters.

Although inflation was up a modest 4.3 percent during the first 11 months of 1984, the consumer became more cautious during the last several months of the year. Reports of rising unemployment and the possibility of a further slowdown in 1985 caused consumers to cut back purchases of goods and services, such as restaurant meals. Retail sales gains slowed, with sales for September, October and November up 8.1 percent over the same three months in 1983. The advance for the summer quarter was a healthier 9.7 percent. In addition, consumers opted to save more of their income. The personal savings rate reached 6.3 percent in the third quarter versus a 5.7 percent rate in the second quarter.

The unemployment rate was up during the fall quarter as well. It leveled off at 7.4 percent in September and October, but dipped to 7.2 percent in



*Sales based on total U.S. average for two-week period each quarter.

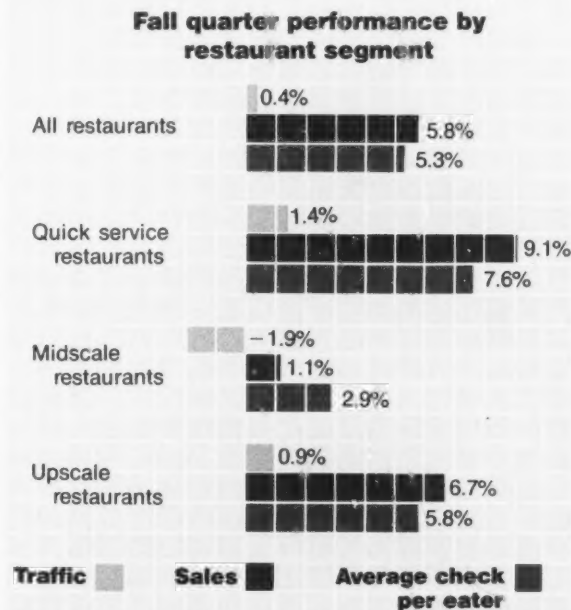
Note: Percent change is from the same quarter in prior year.

Source: CREST Household Report, CREST NPD Research, Inc.

November due largely to additional hiring for the Christmas season. However, this is still higher than the 7.1 percent jobless rate posted in June.

Despite the moderating growth, the National Restaurant Association fore-

casts that restaurant sales will post relatively strong gains in 1985. Real eating place sales, adjusted for inflation, are expected to advance 3.7 percent. Moderate inflation and rising consumer incomes contribute to this positive outlook.



Note: Percent change from the same quarter in prior year.

Source: CREST Household Report, CREST NPD Research, Inc.

Households dine out more often . . .

The average number of times families and singles visited restaurants—visit frequency—rose a modest 0.9 percent during the fall quarter. This compares with a more substantial 2.6 percent increase in the summer period and a 2.2 percent advance in the spring quarter. Approximately 78 percent of all households dined out at least once in the fall quarter—down 1.6 percent from the same quarter a year ago.

An analysis of visit frequency by industry segments—quick-service, mid-scale and upscale—shows that quick-service restaurants experienced the largest gain—1.8 percent. Upscale restaurants also posted a positive increase in visit frequency—1.4 percent. Midscale establishments, however, recorded a slight decline in visit frequency—0.2 percent. This would seem to indicate that patrons are continuing to trade up and trade down, depending on their economic well-being. However, all three restaurant types experienced decreases in penetration—the actual number of households dining out at least once in the two-week period.

Restaurant sales advance 5.8 percent . . .

CREST sales continued to post moderate gains and advanced 5.8 percent during the September-October-November period. This is slightly higher than the 4.3 percent advance in the summer quarter but well below the 11.8 and 9.9 percent gains posted in the spring and winter quarters, respectively.

The average expenditure for a restaurant meal or snack—per person check size—rose 5.3 percent during the fall, the largest advance in more than two

Percent change in per person check* (fall 1982—fall 1984)

Quarter		Average check per eater	Percent change
1982	Fall	\$3.19	3.9%
	Winter	\$3.26	2.5%
1983	Spring	\$3.25	3.5%
	Summer	\$3.18	3.2%
1984	Fall	\$3.19	nc**
	Winter	\$3.38	3.7%
	Spring	\$3.38	4.0%
	Summer	\$3.24	1.9%
	Fall	\$3.22	5.3%

*Based on average for two-week period
**No change

Note: Percent change is from the same period in prior year.
Source: CREST Household Report, CREST NPD Research, Inc.

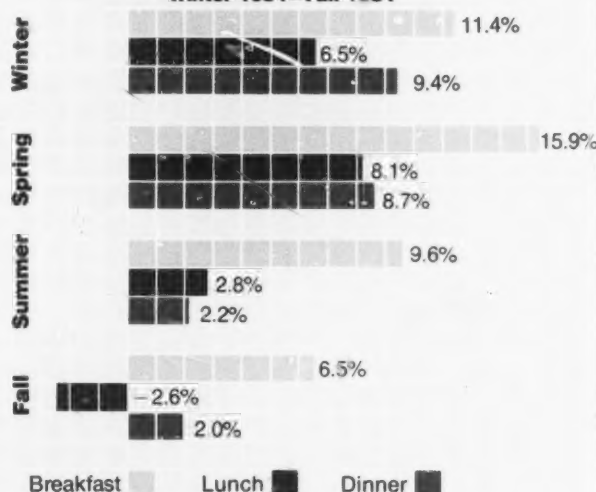
years. This compares with an increase of 1.9 percent posted during the summer quarter and the 4.0 percent and 3.7 percent gains registered during the spring and winter periods, respectively.

The 5.3 percent increase in average check size is higher than the 4.0 percent gain recorded by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for food-away-from-home during September, October and November. One reason for this is that growth in customer counts for dinner, the most expensive meal period, outpaced the overall growth in traffic. As a result, average check amounts have gone up. Also, patrons may have been ordering more items and more expensive items.

Breakfast and dinner traffic increased . . .

Traffic rose in two of the three major meal periods in the fall quarter. Breakfast traffic showed the largest gain—up 6.5 percent from one year earlier. Dinner traffic posted a somewhat lower 3.0 percent advance, while lunch traffic declined 2.6 percent.

Customer traffic by meal occasion Winter 1984—Fall 1984



Note: Percent change is from the same quarter in prior year.
Source: CREST Household Report, CREST NPD Research, Inc.

What is CREST?

Launched in September 1975, the CREST (Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends) survey is designed to track expenditures and behavior in the commercial segment of the foodservice industry, including information by type and classification of restaurant and also by meal or snack period.

Approximately 10,000 families and 2,800 non-family households, representing demographic patterns in the U.S., have been selected to participate in the study. Each household is asked to record every meal and snack experience during a particular two-week period for each of the four quarters of the year. Detailed entries are required for meals eaten or purchased away from home in establishments, such as restaurants, hotels and motels, fast food/drive-ins, delicatessens, refreshment stands, carryouts, coffee shops, donut shops, ice cream shops or eating places inside variety

stores or other retail stores. The diary does not include any meals eaten at schools, hospitals, colleges or other institutional feeding places.

CREST information can help restaurateurs compare their operation's performance with that of the total industry as well as with specific restaurant categories (quick service, midscale or upscale restaurants).

The CREST study can also provide valuable information concerning customer behavior, such as how much people spend, where they spend and when they spend. And, because it is an ongoing study, CREST information allows comparison against a standard—an aid in the development of trend analysis.

Readers wishing more information on the CREST study should contact GDR/CREST Enterprises, one of the NPD group of marketing and research companies, 1300 W. Higgins Rd., Park Ridge, IL 60068-5798.

Nonetheless, the increase in breakfast traffic is smaller than in the summer and spring periods, when breakfast registered gains of 9.6 percent and 15.9 percent, respectively. The growth in dinner traffic is somewhat higher than the summer quarter's 2.2 percent gain, but it is substantially below the 8.7 percent advance recorded in the spring quarter. The decline in customer counts during the lunch period may be the result of the increase in unemployment.

Breakfast highlights:

- Breakfast sales climbed a hefty 10.1 percent.
- The per person check averaged \$2.26—a 3.2 percent advance.
- The average number of times households ate breakfast out rose 0.9 percent; however, penetration was down 1.3 percent.

Lunch highlights:

- Lunch sales increased a slight 2.4 percent.
- The average check increased 5.1 percent to \$3.11.
- Visit frequency dipped 1.2 percent and penetration declined two percent.

Dinner highlights:

- Dinner sales rose 7.0 percent.
- The average check totaled \$4.52—up 3.9 percent from a year earlier.

● Visit frequency advanced 3.9 percent, which helped to boost traffic. However, penetration was down 2.1 percent.

Traffic rises at quick service and upscale restaurants . . .

Quick service restaurants posted the strongest traffic gain this fall—up 1.4 percent over a year earlier. Upscale restaurants recorded a somewhat lower 0.9 percent increase. Midscale restaurants, for the second consecutive quarter, experienced a drop in customer counts, declining 1.9 percent in the fall period.

Ethnic restaurants continued to steal the show, posting especially strong traffic advances in the quick service and upscale segments. Upscale hotel restaurants also performed well in the fall quarter. On the other hand, traffic counts at fish and seafood restaurants in all three major segments dropped.

Quick service highlights:

- Sales rose 9.1 percent in the quick service segment.
- The number of occasions on which deals were used fell a slight 1.5 percent.
- Quick service ethnic restaurants experienced the largest increase in traffic—up an impressive 28.0 percent. Both Oriental and Mexican restaurants posted substantial gains.
- Customer counts at quick service specialty establishments increased 5.8 percent during the fall quarter.
- Sandwich/varied menu restaurants experienced a drop of 1.1 percent in customer traffic. Declines in traffic at hamburger and other sandwich establishments contributed to this decrease.

Upscale restaurant highlights:

- Upscale restaurant sales increased 6.7 percent in the

fall quarter. A higher average per person check along with slightly higher traffic helped boost sales.

- The number of occasions on which promotions were used fell a hefty 7.4 percent.

● Traffic at upscale specialty restaurants was down 16.2 percent during the fall period. Large decreases in customer counts at fish and steak establishments contributed to this decline.

- Upscale ethnic restaurants showed a 3.9 percent increase in traffic. Mexican restaurants experienced the largest gain in this category.

● Upscale hotel restaurants posted the greatest increase in traffic—a substantial 14.4 percent advance.

Midscale restaurant highlights:

- Sales at midscale restaurants increased a slight 1.1 percent. A decline in customer traffic, a moderately higher average check size and a decline in visit frequency are behind this small gain.

● Promotional usage declined 8.9 percent in the fall quarter. This compares with a drop of 3.7 percent during the summer period.

- All sectors of the midscale restaurant segment reported decreases in customer counts. Midscale hotel/retail restaurants experienced the smallest decline in customer traffic—0.5 percent.

● Traffic at family-style midscale restaurants decreased a slight 1.0 percent. A drop in traffic at varied menu restaurants accounted for this decline.

- The midscale specialty restaurant category suffered the largest drop in customer counts—down 7.0 percent.

Declines in traffic at barbecue, fish/seafood, family steak and sandwich restaurants contributed to the decline.

—Susan Adelman

What you eat may depend on where you are

The variety of restaurants across the country varies from region to region. One area may have a concentration of seafood restaurants, while another favors Oriental establishments.

To give restaurant operators a clearer view of the

restaurant distribution across the country, this article presents the highlights of the third annual RE-COUNT study, produced by Restaurant Consulting Group, Inc. Forty-seven restaurant types in each of the nine census regions and

Number and proportion of restaurant types across the U.S.

Restaurant type	Number of units	Proportion of total
Pizza	31,053	10.3%
Hamburger	26,585	8.8
Ice cream	18,104	6.0
Oriental	12,487	4.1
Family style	12,324	4.1
Mexican	11,851	3.9
Cafe	11,284	3.7
Chicken	10,879	3.6
Fish/seafood	8,531	2.8
Steak	7,751	2.5
Barbecue	5,228	1.7
Donut	4,771	1.6
Italian	4,096	1.4
Deli/bagel	4,076	1.3
Other sandwich	3,983	1.3
Sub	3,766	1.2
Coffee shop	3,584	1.2
Refreshment/snack	3,210	1.1
Cafeteria	2,624	0.9
Hot dog	2,526	0.8
Other specialty ¹	2,475	0.8
Grill	2,388	0.8
Other ethnic ²	2,344	0.8
Diner	2,336	0.8
Luncheonette	2,303	0.7
Roast beef	2,150	0.7
Pancake/waffle	1,873	0.6
Upscale	1,751	0.6
French	1,285	0.4
Truck stop	763	0.3
Unclassified	94,456	31.2
Total	302,837	100.0%

¹Includes: crepe, natural/vegetarian, yogurt, potato, pretzel, soup, chili, biscuit and fondue restaurants.

²Includes: German, Spanish, Greek, Indian and soul food.

Source: RE-COUNT

the total United States are featured.* Unit counts are based on spring 1984 data.

The information illustrates the existing competition and consumer preferences in various parts of the country as well as opportunities for expansion.

Highlights . . .

- Pizza restaurants account for the largest share of establishments across the country—10.3 percent.

Hamburger restaurants follow with a smaller 8.8 percent share. However, hamburger units outnumber all other establishments, including pizza, in six out of nine census regions.

- Pizza restaurants are more prevalent in three regions—New England, Middle Atlantic and East North Central. Almost half the nation's pizza units are located in these three areas.

- Two-thirds of the coun-

try's Mexican restaurants are located in the southwestern U.S. The Pacific region, however, includes approximately one-third of total Mexican establishments.

- Oriental restaurants are clustered on the East and West coasts. The Middle Atlantic and Pacific regions account for almost half the nation's Oriental establishments.

- Southerners love chicken and barbecue—almost half the country's chicken restaurants and approximately seven out of 10 barbecue units are located in the South.

- Almost one out of every five ice cream restaurants is in the East North Central region. In the New England and Middle Atlantic regions, there are more ice cream shops than hamburger restaurants.

- More than a quarter of

the nation's seafood restaurants are clustered in the South Atlantic region.

Pizza captures largest market slice . . .

According to the RE-COUNT study, pizza establishments outnumber all other restaurant types in the U.S. As of spring 1984, there were 16.8 percent more pizza restaurants than hamburger units—the second largest restaurant category. In 1984, pizza units comprised a whopping 10.3 percent of the restaurants across the country, up from 9.9 percent one year earlier. In comparison, hamburger outlets accounted for a smaller 8.8 percent of the market in 1984, only slightly above the 8.7 percent reported in 1983.

Ice cream restaurants captured the number three spot, accounting for six percent of total establishments.

Oriental and family style restaurants follow—each comprises 4.1 percent of the nation's restaurants. Mexican and chicken establishments make up, respectively, 3.9 percent and 3.6 percent of the restaurants across the country. Altogether, pizza, hamburger, ice cream, Oriental, family style, Mexican and chicken restaurants account for more than four out of 10 restaurants in the U.S.

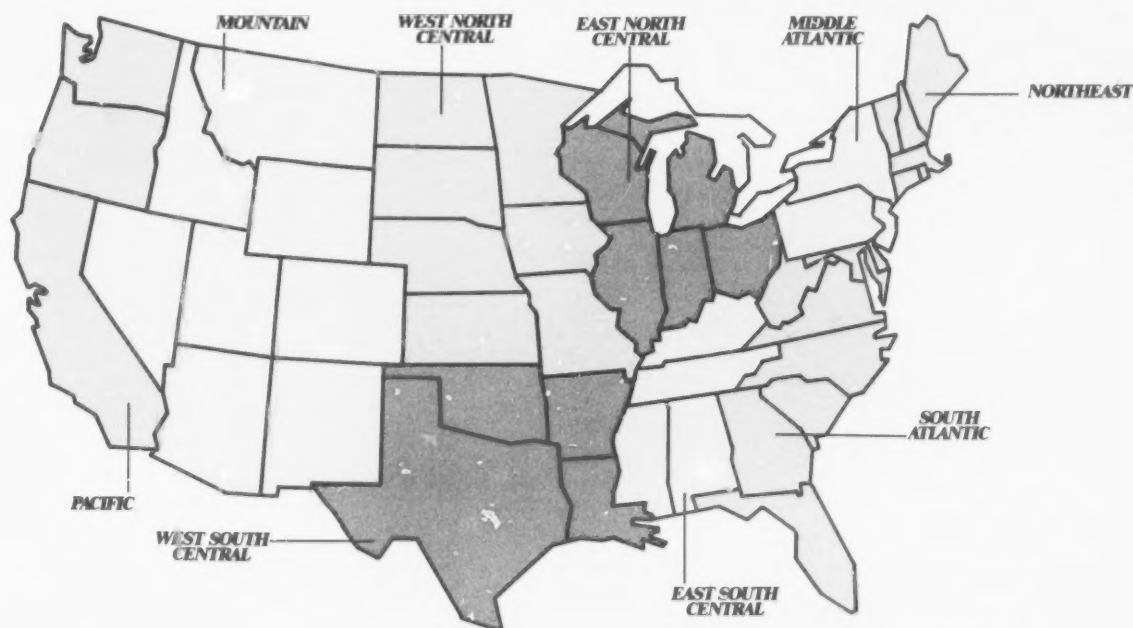
Due to regional preferences and population variations, the proportions of these and other categories vary in different areas of the country.

Regional highlights . . .

New England

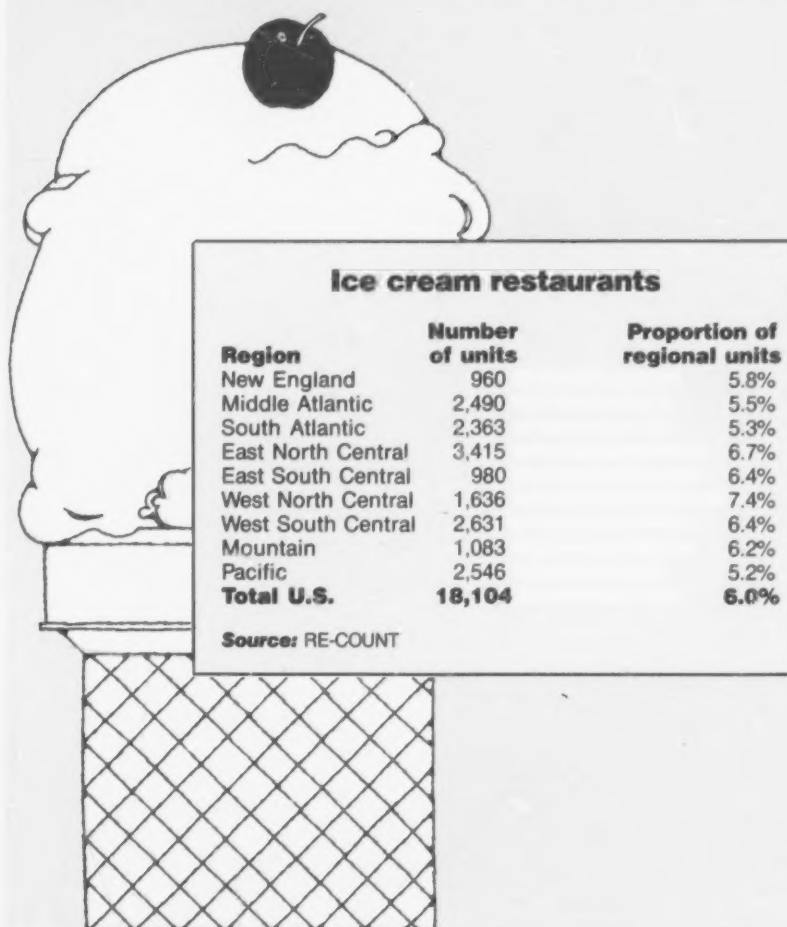
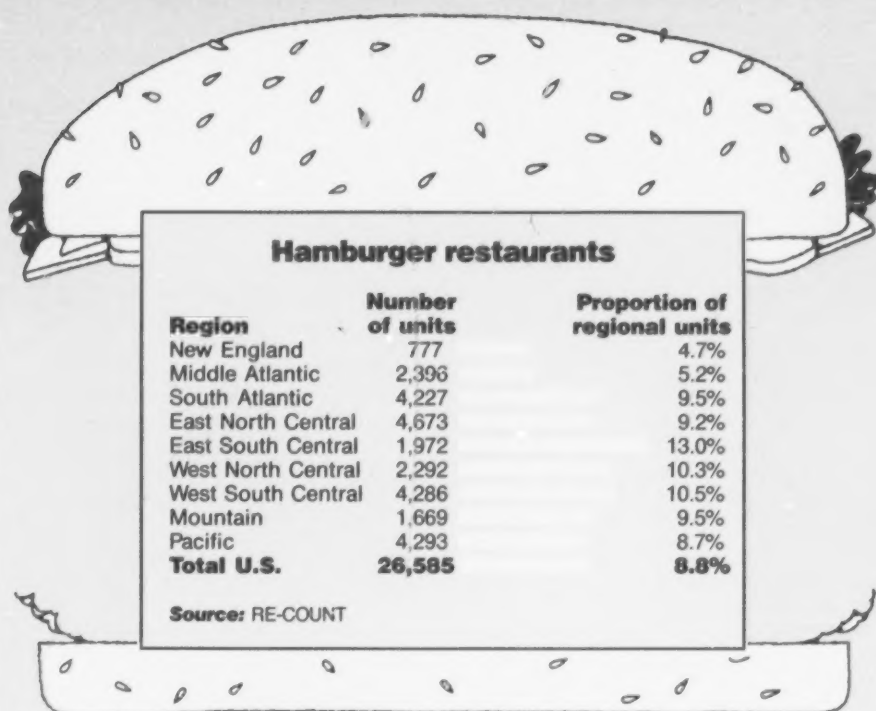
- Pizza restaurants make up the largest concentration of restaurants—13.4 percent.

- New England has the smallest proportion of ham-



* The RE-COUNT study was compiled by Restaurant Consulting Group, Inc., from a variety of sources, including government information, credit reporting services and white and yellow page phone directories. Restaurant Consulting Group estimates the RE-COUNT study covers between 80 and 83 percent of the total restaurant market as of spring 1984 but notes that the proportions of restaurant types across the U.S. should be accurate.

NRA's restaurant count differs somewhat from the RE-COUNT study due to variations in classification. Difficulties in accurately identifying restaurants across the country account for the large proportion of unclassified units. This is the third year of the study, however, and the unclassified segment is decreasing as data collection methods improve. **NRA NEWS** reviewed the first RE-COUNT study in the September 1983 issue.



burger restaurants in the country—4.7 percent. This is well below the 8.8 percent national average.

- This region has the smallest proportion of chicken restaurants in the nation—1.3 percent.

- The proportion of seafood, family style, donut and sub establishments is above average.

- There are fewer ethnic restaurants than average.

Middle Atlantic

- Pizza restaurants account for the largest proportion of restaurants—13.9 percent—the highest concentration in the nation.

- Hamburger establishments make up a low 5.2 percent of the restaurants.

- There is a small percentage of chicken outlets—1.6 percent.

- The proportion of diners, Oriental restaurants and Italian restaurants is above average.

- There is a below average concentration of seafood, full menu and steak restaurants.

South Atlantic

- Hamburger restaurants are most prevalent, accounting for 9.5 percent of total establishments.

- Pizza restaurants represent the second highest concentration—9.0 percent.

- This region has the highest proportion of seafood restaurants in the country—4.9 percent.

- There is an above average concentration of chicken, barbecue, steak, full menu, pancake/waffle and deli establishments as well as cafeterias.

- There is a low proportion of ethnic restaurants and ice cream shops.

East North Central

- Pizza restaurants capture the largest share of market with 13.3 percent of regional restaurants.

- Hamburger outlets ac-

count for an above average 9.2 percent.

- Ice cream restaurants are the third largest group with 6.7 percent of establishments.

- There is an above average percentage of chicken and full menu restaurants.

- There is a below average proportion of seafood and ethnic restaurants.

East South Central

- Hamburger restaurants capture the number one spot with 13.0 percent of regional establishments—the largest concentration of hamburger restaurants in the U.S.

- Pizza outlets account for a below average 8.7 percent of the area's restaurants.

- This region boasts the largest proportion of chicken establishments in the country—6.2 percent.

- The area has the highest concentration of full menu restaurants in the U.S. and an above average proportion of steak, seafood, barbecue and ice cream establishments.

- It has the lowest percentage of ethnic restaurants in the nation.

West North Central

- Hamburger restaurants are most prevalent, representing 10.3 percent of the region's establishments.

- Pizza restaurants account for 9.7 percent of regional outlets.

- The area has the highest proportion of ice cream shops in the country—7.4 percent.

- There is an above average concentration of steak and full menu restaurants.

- The region has the smallest proportion of seafood restaurants in the U.S. and a below average percentage of chicken and ethnic establishments.

West South Central

- Hamburger restaurants

Mexican restaurants

Region	Number of units	Proportion of regional units
New England	116	0.7%
Middle Atlantic	410	0.9%
South Atlantic	909	2.0%
East North Central	1,265	2.5%
East South Central	301	2.0%
West North Central	829	3.7%
West South Central	2,704	6.6%
Mountain	1,331	7.6%
Pacific	3,986	8.1%
Total U.S.	11,851	3.9%

Source: RE-COUNT

Chicken restaurants

Region	Number of units	Proportion of regional units
New England	216	1.3%
Middle Atlantic	732	1.6%
South Atlantic	2,328	5.2%
East North Central	1,872	3.7%
East South Central	935	6.2%
West North Central	658	3.0%
West South Central	2,133	5.2%
Mountain	520	3.0%
Pacific	1,485	3.0%
Total U.S.	10,879	3.6%

Source: RE-COUNT

Pizza restaurants

Region	Number of units	Proportion of regional units
New England	2,213	13.4%
Middle Atlantic	6,334	13.9%
South Atlantic	4,003	9.0%
East North Central	6,797	13.3%
East South Central	1,319	8.7%
West North Central	2,157	9.7%
West South Central	2,710	6.6%
Mountain	1,640	9.3%
Pacific	3,880	7.9%
Total U.S.	31,053	10.3%

Source: RE-COUNT

Oriental restaurants

Region	Number of units	Proportion of regional units
New England	697	4.2%
Middle Atlantic	2,522	5.5%
South Atlantic	1,581	3.6%
East North Central	1,497	2.9%
East South Central	273	1.8%
West North Central	633	2.9%
West South Central	1,172	2.9%
Mountain	604	3.4%
Pacific	3,508	7.1%
Total U.S.	12,487	4.1%

Source: RE-COUNT

account for the majority of establishments—10.5 percent.

- Pizza and Mexican restaurants are tied for the number two spot—each makes up 6.6 percent of the area's establishments. This is the smallest proportion of pizza restaurants in the nation.

- The area has the largest concentration of barbecue outlets and cafeterias in the country and an above average proportion of chicken, seafood and ice cream restaurants.

- The region has the lowest percentage of full menu restaurants in the U.S.

Mountain

- The proportion of hamburger (9.5 percent) and pizza establishments (9.3 percent) is fairly even.

- Mexican restaurants account for a large 7.6 percent of the area's establishments.

- The area has an above average concentration of steak, full menu and ice cream restaurants.

- The region has a below average proportion of chicken and seafood restaurants.

Pacific

- Hamburger restaurants account for 8.7 percent of the area's establishments.

- Mexican restaurants (8.1 percent) outnumber pizza establishments (7.9 percent).

- The area has the highest concentration of Oriental restaurants in the country—7.1 percent.

- The region has the largest percentage of delis in the nation—2.2 percent—and an above average proportion of Italian, French and full menu establishments.

- The area has a below average proportion of cafeterias, chicken, seafood, steak and ice cream restaurants.

—Cecelia Niepold

by Cecelia Niepold

This month's interviews are an example of the diversity of catering operations across the country. For instance, some caterers serve a particular industry, such as the airlines, while others focus on complete party planning for a variety of customers. Menu specialties can also differ, ranging from customized lobster bakes to trays of hors d'oeuvres.

1

NORTHEAST

Location: South Portland, ME

NRA member: Ted Smith

Operation: International Caterers Incorporated

Profile: Off-premise caterer

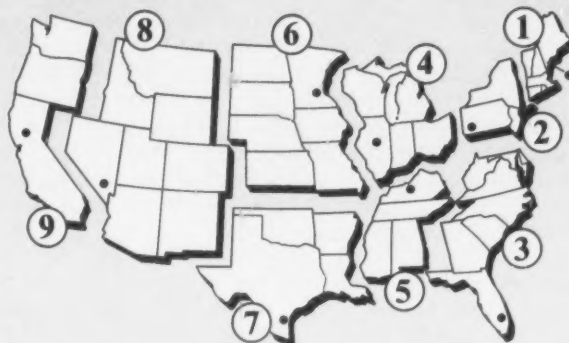
In business: 12 years

Business has been going exceptionally well, says **Ted Smith**, owner of International Caterers, Incorporated. Overall sales during 1984 were up about 30 percent. The business climate in the Portland area is very good—numerous Defense Department contracts have given the local economy a boost.

Smith's catering services run the gamut from cocktail parties to airline meals, but his specialty is lobster bakes. He has catered lobster bakes around the country and will even ship "do it yourself" lobster bake packages to customers. Kits include everything from pots to cook the lobsters in to clams and corn on the cob. Smith also offers shipping services for other products, such as frozen lobster tails.

To broaden his business, Smith may purchase an ocean front inn. He believes the inn will offer a charming, personalized atmosphere for business meetings as well as outdoor weddings and parties.

How's business?



2

MIDDLE ATLANTIC

Location: Pittsburgh, PA

NRA member: Charles Schwartz

Operation: Charles Catering & Gourmet Delicatessen

Profile: Off-premise catering and two delis

In business: 19 years

Business is up a little bit over last year, says **Charles Schwartz**, owner of Charles Catering & Gourmet Delicatessen. The general economy in the Pittsburgh area is "OK," but the steel industry is still not doing too well.

Schwartz's business started as strictly catering, but he saw a need for a service that would allow people to take out items for smaller parties. Consequently, he has developed a deli operation that offers hors d'oeuvres and party trays as well as soups and sandwiches. Business has taken off, and he has opened a second deli.

Interestingly, Schwartz's business has benefited from the slowdown in the economy. Companies or individuals who want a quality, but

somewhat scaled down, party often opt to hold catered functions at home or in the office rather than patronize a more expensive establishment.

3

SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: West Palm Beach, FL

NRA member: G. Pendergast

Operation: Jerry's Caterers, Inc.

Profile: Airline catering business, serving 13 airports in Florida, one in Georgia

In business: 42 years

"We are enjoying a good year," says **Kim Townsend**, vice president of Jerry's Caterers—a company that specializes in airline catering,

4

EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Springfield, IL

NRA member: Court Conn

Operation: Conn's Catering

Profile: Off-premise caterer

In business: 37 years

Business doubled during the Christmas season, compared with the year before, and 1985 is shaping up very well, says **Court Conn**, owner of Conn's Catering. The general economy in the area has been very good. Springfield, the state capital, didn't feel the recession as much as some other areas in the state.

Conn prides himself on the diversity of catering projects his company takes on. He believes it can be detrimental to focus exclusively on any one specific area. Consequently, he can provide anything from soda and hot dogs for 5,000 to hors d'oeuvres and dinner for a small, elegant outdoor wedding.



5

EAST SOUTH
CENTRAL**Location:** Lexington, KY**NRA member:** Michael Wolken**Operation:** Turf Catering Company**Profile:** Company services restaurants and concessions at several race tracks and also operates off-premise catering**In business:** 49 years

Business in the area is very good, says **Michael Wolken**, vice president of the Turf Catering Company—a small family-owned business. The Lexington area is experiencing strong growth, and Wolken's business is up six to seven percent over a year ago.

The company's major focus is providing foodservice for restaurants and concessions at several racetracks. Because the racetracks close during the summer, the company began catering during these off-season months.

Wolken specializes in overcoming catering challenges. For instance, the company is known for coordinating parties in locations that lack normal eating and drinking facilities. For example, guests at the annual Egyptian Arabian horse show at the Kentucky Horse Park (where there is no running water) are served under large tents.

6

WEST NORTH
CENTRAL**Location:** St. Paul, MN**NRA member:** Harry S. Given, Jr.**Operation:** Prom Catering Company, Inc.**Profile:** Off-premise caterer**In business:** 30 years

"Business is growing in

the Twin Cities. There's a lot of action in the area," says **Harry Given**, owner of the Prom Catering Company, Inc. More new cultural facilities and the remodeling of the civic center have led to increased business for his company. Sales are already substantially ahead of last year.

Given has developed his business into the largest catering firm in Minnesota. How? By providing the right kind of equipment to serve food the right way, says Given. For instance, the area's cold climate makes it difficult to keep food warm, and he has several mobile kitchens to ensure the food is served at proper temperatures.

Given also believes it is important to cater to changing food preferences. For example, he has noticed that customers enjoy unusual hors d'oeuvres. So, he has developed some interesting appetizer selections, such as individual wild rice quiches and small portions of yakatori (chicken breasts marinated in saki and soy sauce and charcoal broiled).

7

WEST SOUTH
CENTRAL**Location:** Alice, TX**NRA member:** Ren Reid**Operation:** The Queen Bee Eating Place and Catering Service**Profile:** Off-premise catering and fullservice restaurant**In business:** 5 years

"Business is fantastic and gets better every year," says **Ren Reid**, owner of The Queen Bee Eating Place and Catering Service. The local economy, however, is not doing very well. Business is depressed due to the drop off in the oil business.

Reid credits his good

business to the extra services his company provides. "We do much more than just deliver, serve, pick up and leave. We are complete party planners," he explains proudly. Jobs are individually tailored for each customer. Reid will coordinate the whole event and even take care of details, such as flowers, photographs and decorations.

Reid believes an off-premise caterer puts his reputation on the line every time he takes a job.

"You're only as good as your last job," he explains. One way he ensures good service is by preparing 10 to 15 percent more food than he has contracted to serve. "The cost of serving more food is much less than the embarrassment of being caught short," he maintains.

8

MOUNTAIN

Location: North Las Vegas, NV**NRA member:** R.A. Keller**Operation:** Golden West Catering**Profile:** Wholesale sandwich business**In business:** 7 years

The economy in the Las Vegas area is not very good, and unemployment is high, says **R. A. Keller**, owner of Golden West Catering—a company that provides pre-wrapped, wholesale sandwiches. Even so, Keller's business is going well. He attributes his success to branching out. When Keller first started his business, he only supplied sandwiches to local bars. Then he noticed that the bar business was slowing, and he decided to also work with mobile caterers and vendors. It was a timely decision.

Keller started his business with only four kinds of

sandwiches. Now he offers 60 different combinations and a variety of hot dogs. The sandwiches are "the biggest in the area" and are made fresh every day on 10 different kinds of bread. One of Keller's favorites is his own creation—a French dip sandwich which comes packaged with its own cup of natural gravy.

9

PACIFIC

Location: Folsom, CA**NRA member:** Renee Lefever**Operation:** Balcony Restaurant and Gourmet Catering**Profile:** Restaurant and catering operation**In business:** 2 years

Business is on an upward trend, says **Renee Lefever**, co-owner of the Balcony Restaurant and Gourmet Catering. Although Folsom is a small, old-fashioned town located about 22 miles north of Sacramento, new software companies are locating in the area and are boosting the local economy.

The Balcony Restaurant follows the town's quaint 1900's theme. Located upstairs in an old building, the 70-seat restaurant includes a balcony that overlooks the town. Much of Lefever's catering business comes from restaurant customers who are charmed by the establishment's intimate atmosphere. The restaurant is only open for lunch, which enables Lefever to use the facilities for catering functions at night.

Lefever prides herself on taking jobs that other people are reluctant to tackle. For instance, a recent challenge was to cater a vegetarian wedding. Another was putting together a last minute international buffet, using cold entrees.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Fishy chicken

If your customers think there is something fishy about your chicken, they may be right. Researchers at the University of Maryland report that if more than 10 percent of a chicken's food intake is fish meal, the fishy taste may be transferred to the meat.

Dr. James L. Heath, the scientist in charge of the study sets the figure even lower. He says that four to five percent is a safer bet for commercial broilers.

—*Washington Times*



Training chefs your own way

Following the lead of such nationally-known foodservice organizations as the Marriott Corporation and McDonald's, an increasing number of small, privately owned restaurant companies are taking to training their own chefs.

Conveyor belt dining

"People today are looking for high quality food—in a hurry," says William Liederman, explaining the concept behind Dine-O-Mat, the restaurant he and partner Michael Bradshaw recently opened in New York City. Food at Dine-O-Mat is served from a conveyor belt, which enables customers to get in and out and still have minutes to spare on their lunch hour.

"What we shave on time, we don't shave on quality," emphasizes Liederman. Crayfish jambalaya salad, Denver ribs grilled with honey mustard or Pennsylvania Dutch crumb pie are just some of the delicacies that are rolled out daily. And although this dining-on-the-run concept is definitely a trend of the 1980s, the restaurant's art deco decor has all the vintage charm of the 1930s.

—*NRA News interview*

"We're better off training our own chefs than sending them elsewhere," says Stuart Long, owner of a string of restaurants and upscale American pubs in Washington, DC. Chefs employed by the Capitol Hill Management Corporation (CHMC), Long's company, attend weekly classes that are taught by the company's premier chef. The classes are held year-round and culminate in a graduation. As a result, chefs at CHMC's restaurants do things CHMC's way.

"We used to send our chefs to a local school, but all they learned there was French sauces," says Long. "We don't do that many sauces at our restaurants. It makes sense to train our chefs our own way."

—*Washington Times*

Rain checks for drinks

The Marriott in Grand Rapids, MI, recently came up with a new concept to replace two-for-one drink offers. Customers receive a token for a second drink of equal value redeemable at any other time or on any other day in the restaurant or lounge.

"Not only does the promotion encourage repeat business," says general manager Robert Goldbach, "but it discourages customers from drinking too much, just to get their money's worth." Goldbach says customer reaction to the promotion has been tremendous.

—*NRA News interview*

Inflight wine sales soar

Wine labels are getting increased attention from the major airlines as more inflight passengers bypass hard liquor in favor of wine.

Airlines are hiring outside consultants to recommend wines, picking dining managers with expertise in wine or even using employees for taste tests to improve their wine menus.

"Airlines are paying more attention

because the country is more wine-conscious," says Mike Clark, spokesman for Pan American World Airways, which holds wine tastings in first-class aboard some international flights. At Eastern Airlines, wine consumption is up 20 percent in the past year. "Wines have to be acceptable to a broad range of American tastes—not too dry, not too sweet," says Wolfgang Diehl, director of dining services for Eastern. And, he adds, wines cannot be too delicate to be stored in pressurized cabins. A light chablis is usually acceptable, he says.

—*USA Today*

FOODSERVICE MANAGEMENT KNOW-HOW

Foodservice management is a balancing act. Successful managers continuously juggle their expertise as menu specialists, lawyers, personnel experts, purchasing agents, promotions planners and more. When they need more know-how, they know where to get it.

Accuracy in menus

Be sure that your customers are ordering what they think they are ordering. This newly-revised booklet describes how to represent quality, quantity, price, brand names and product points of origin. If you are working on a new menu or are revising an old one, this publication is a must. **FSO30, booklet, \$2.00**

The Legal Problem Solver for Foodservice Operators

The Legal Problem Solver is an easy-to-use reference tool for the hands-on operator and the corporate foodservice lawyer alike. It gives you the latest information on tip reporting, minimum wage laws, record keeping, tax problems and much more. Most importantly, it keeps the law on your side. **MG410, 3-ring binder, \$14.50**

Stress Management for the Hospitality Manager

Estimates indicate that the hospitality manager is called upon to make an operational decision every 48 seconds. These decisions can cause stress. After reading this book, you will be able to examine stress factors and better cope with its roots and symptoms. You will learn how to become more productive at your job by controlling stress. Both your work and leisure environments will become more enjoyable. **MG455, soft-cover book, \$10.00**

Uniform Systems of Accounts for Restaurants

This NRA bestseller presents a complete, easy-to-use record keeping system for foodservice operations. Filled with examples, from balance sheets to salary and wage control reports, this book was prepared with the accounting needs of the small restaurant operation in mind. **MG936, soft-cover book, \$14.95**



NRA Publications When you need management know-how specific to the foodservice industry, NRA publications have it. Each NRA publication provides you with relevant, current foodservice information. The hands-on approach enables you to put the information you learn to work immediately.

Resisting to Unionization Efforts

If you are non-union and concerned about unionization activities in your operation, this booklet is for you. It will brief you on your rights as an employer and list actions you should and should not take to resist unionization. **MG420, booklet, \$5.00**

Profitable Purchasing

This edited transcript from NRA's Second Annual National Conference on Purchasing brings you up to date with the dynamics of purchasing in the foodservice industry. It is a newsletter, checklist and manual all in one. Top purchasing agents from operations of all sizes describe their programs—from purchasing specifications to an in-depth look at the commodities market. **MG571, soft-cover book, \$11.00**

PRO-Motion Newsletter

Learn how to build your business and profits with unique and exciting promotions. Published bi-monthly, each issue comes packed with original promotional ideas. Special features each issue help you develop your merchandising, media relations and advertising programs. **PROMO, newsletter, six issues annually, \$12.00 members, \$60.00 non-members**

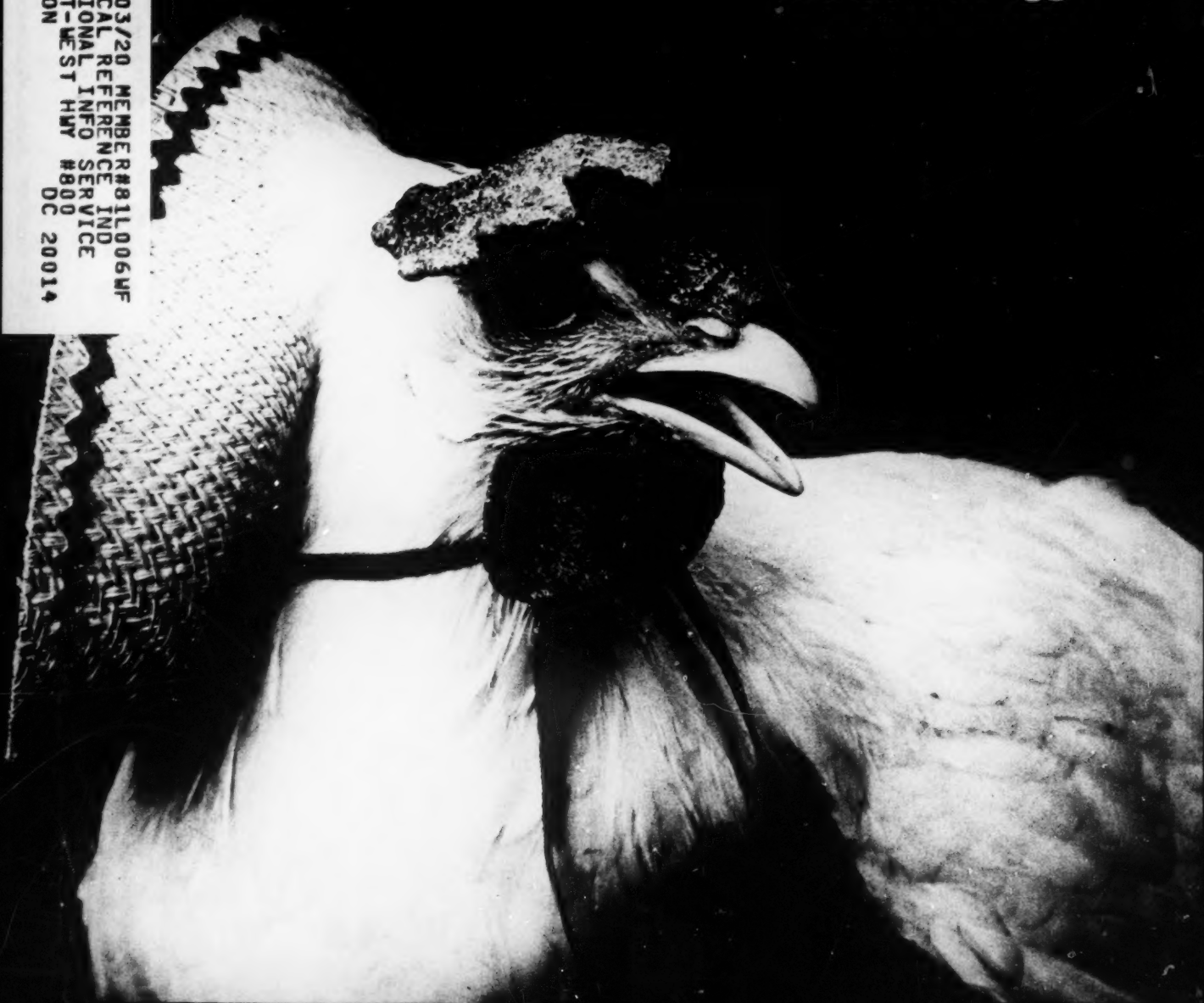
Foodservice Information Abstracts

You will be able to keep up on all the news in the foodservice industry with *Foodservice Information Abstracts*. This semi-monthly service summarizes articles from the trade press on advertising/marketing, government relations, industry trends, menu expansion and more. Stay abreast of industry news in a fraction of the time. **FSAST, 24 issues annually, \$35.00 members, \$70.00 non-members**

ETHNIC FAST FOOD

The Golden Egg?

03/20 MEMBER #811006 MF
STATISTICAL REFERENCE INFO
CONGRESSIONAL INFO SERVICE
4520 EAST-WEST HWY #800
WASHINGTON DC 20014



NRA MEETINGS

NRA NEWS

Vol. 5 No. 3

March 1985

Seminars

Basic Foodservice Courses

Basic Supervision in Foodservice
4/9 Wilmington, DE
6/11 Orlando, FL
6/26 Seattle, WA

Computers in Foodservice: A Primer

4/23 Denver, CO
5/18 Chicago, IL
(NRA Show)
6/3 Boston, MA
6/25 Minneapolis, MN

Dining Room Management

4/16 Albany, NY
4/18 Meadowlands, NJ
4/22 Savannah, GA
4/24 Pompano Beach, FL
5/7 Greensboro, NC
5/14 Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
5/19 Chicago, IL
(NRA Show)
6/17 Annapolis, MD
6/19 Jackson, MS

Increasing Foodservice Productivity

4/19 Portland, OR
4/22 Kansas City, MO
5/18 Chicago, IL
(NRA Show)

Kitchen Management

4/4 Manchester, NH
4/9 Atlanta, GA
4/10 Houston, TX
4/14 Bismarck, ND
4/16 Detroit, MI
5/9 St. Louis, MO
5/19 Chicago, IL
(NRA Show)
6/10 Orlando, FL
6/19 Hartford, CT

Opening a Restaurant: Before You Start Cooking...

5/19 Chicago, IL
(NRA Show)
6/3 Lexington, KY
6/26 Grand Rapids, MI

People-Power and Profits

4/10 Cleveland, OH
5/29 Williamsburg, VA

Tools for Training

4/16 Richmond, VA
4/18 Milwaukee, WI
5/9 Omaha, NE

Please note that registration fees have been reduced for the Basic Foodservice Courses.

Food Production Courses

American Regional Cookery
4/23 Minneapolis, MN
4/25 Denver, CO
5/7 Portland, OR
5/9 Seattle, WA

The Pantry: Prep for Profit

4/17 Milwaukee, WI
6/11 Orlando, FL

Perfecting Your Culinary Skills

4/2 St. Louis, MO
6/5 Hyannis, MA

Simplified Baking Workshop

6/6 Detroit, MI

Soups and Sauces

6/10 Orlando, FL
6/12 Columbia, SC

Foodservice Management Courses

Computers in Foodservice: Advanced

4/24 Denver, CO
5/19 Chicago, IL
(NRA Show)
6/4 Boston, MA
6/26 Minneapolis, MN

Creative Merchandising Techniques

4/16 Boston, MA
5/18 Chicago, IL
(NRA Show)
6/24 Cincinnati, OH

Food Cost Management

4/9 Lancaster, PA
4/11 Portland, ME
4/30 Tulsa, OK
5/2 Little Rock, AR
6/25 Madison, WI
6/27 Billings, MT

Study Group Meetings

Market Research

April 10-12 Washington, DC

Financial Officers

April 10-12 Palm Springs

Tax Executives

April 10-12 Palm Springs

EDP

April 16-19 San Diego

Location! Location! Location! How to Successfully Negotiate and Finance Your New Operation

5/18-19 Chicago, IL
(NRA Show)

Menu Development

4/17 Philadelphia, PA
4/23 Charlotte, NC
5/18 Chicago, IL
(NRA Show)
6/19 Norfolk, VA

Motivation

5/19 Chicago, IL
(NRA Show)

Off-Premise Catering

4/29-30 Columbus, OH
5/6-7 San Francisco, CA
6/3-4 Portland, OR
6/24-25 Denver, CO

Operational Analysis

5/1-2 Boston, MA
5/18-19 Chicago, IL
(NRA Show)
6/5-6 Los Angeles, CA

Planning & Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy

4/16-17 Baltimore, MD
5/18-19 Chicago, IL
(NRA Show)
6/10-11 Orlando, FL

Restaurant Design & Facilities Planning

5/18-19 Chicago, IL
(NRA Show)

For more information, contact:

NRA Education Programs
311 First Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
800-424-5156 or
(202) 638-6100

Internal Audit

April 30-May 5 Lake Tahoe

Foodservice Purchasing Managers

May 15-17 Chicago

MAECO

May 15-17 Chicago

Marketing Executives

May 15-17 Chicago

For more information on specific study groups, contact Philip Kralovec, (312) 853-2525.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Harris O. Machus
President and Owner
Harris O. Machus
Enterprises, Inc.
Birmingham, Michigan

Letters protest
deduction
limit

NRA calls
for TJTC
extension

NRA supports
limited sulfite ban

President Reagan has been receiving a lot of mail from restaurateurs lately. These letters have expressed opposition to the proposal, included in the Treasury Department's Tax Reform plan, to limit the deduction on business meals.

You are NRA's best lobbyists. When you speak out as influential members of the electorate, our political leaders listen. If you have not yet done so, write the President today expressing your opposition to the "capping" of the business meal deduction.

The tax reform plan also includes the elimination of the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC). TJTC allows employers to take a tax credit for a portion of the wages paid to members of nine specified categories of handicapped or economically disadvantaged people. NRA is actively combatting the elimination of this worthwhile program.

Long before any tax reform bill would go into effect, however, the current authorization for TJTC will expire. Representative Charles Rangel (D-NY) has introduced a measure which would extend that authorization for five years, and NRA has testified in favor of this bill.

Many foodservice companies utilize TJTC, and many more would do so if the program were extended for five years or made permanent. Extension of this program is one of NRA's top priorities.

Following reports of yet another death due to sulfites consumed in a restaurant, several states have introduced legislation which would ban these substances or require sulfite labeling in foodservice establishments.

In Washington DC, Senator Albert Gore (D-TN) introduced the Sulfite Safety Act, which would forbid the use of sulfites on fresh fruits and vegetables at both the distributor and retail level. Representative Ron Wyden (D-OR) introduced an identical bill in the House. Unless the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) acts quickly to impose its own ban, it is likely this bill will become law.

At a press conference on Capitol Hill, NRA endorsed the Gore-Wyden bill. A targeted and limited ban, which includes distributors and is imposed at the federal level, is the only practical means of protecting our sulfite sensitive customers and, at the same time, eliminating any need for contradictory measures currently cropping up at the state level.

Restaurateurs
support
Operation:
Prom/Graduation

NRA promotes
holiday sales

List of
national
conferences
released

Each NRA "key member" will shortly receive an information packet on Operation: Prom/Graduation. Participation in this program is a public service, which will draw new customers to your establishment.

Operation: Prom/Graduation is a national campaign, sponsored by NRA, the National Association of Broadcasters, and three other trade associations. It is aimed at reducing drunk driving among teenagers during the prom and graduation season. Its primary vehicle is a pledge card, signed by students and honored with discounts by restaurateurs, tuxedo and car rentals, florists and other retailers.

By offering discounts on special prom-related dinners and suppers for pledge card holders, you will make your restaurant the scene of safe celebrations for graduates and their families. You will also demonstrate once more that restaurateurs are helping to prevent drunk driving.

I urge you to review the Operation: Prom/Graduation information packet carefully and decide how your establishment will participate.

Just before St. Patrick's Day, NRA released a radio actuality. What is a radio actuality? It is a taped news story distributed to radio stations by satellite.

This particular actuality reported that 20 percent of all Americans dine out on St. Paddy's Day. It then described the types of food and festivities which these people would find at their neighborhood restaurants on this particular holiday.

This kind of publicity should help build volume in your restaurant. NRA plans to release many more holiday-related actualities. Keep listening to your radio, and don't forget to plan those holiday specials.

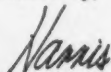
NRA's education programs department has just published the schedule of national conferences to be held in 1985-86. This list is impressive.

- *Promotions & Marketing*
August, Chicago, IL
- *Wine Workshop*
September, Napa Valley, CA
- *Off-Premise Catering*
November, Las Vegas, NV
- *Independent Operators*
February, Orlando, FL
- *Computers*
March, Washington, DC

NRA's national conferences draw leading foodservice operators and well-known experts together for three days of idea exchange. These events have proven very popular. For further information about any of these conferences, call NRA's education programs department at (800) 424-5156.

During the past month, 182 members joined NRA. I welcome you to the most prestigious foodservice trade association in the world. Your participation in NRA will make your business grow and make the association more effective in its endeavors on your behalf. We're glad to have you with us.

Sincerely,



Harris O. Machus
President & Chairman of the Board